

Mission and Development : Imagined Spaces for Women

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DECLARATION

I am responsible for composing this thesis. It represents my own work and where the work of others has been used, it is duly acknowledged.

Signed

Nuala Bryce Gormley

9th August, 1998

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic exploration of the mission place, and the imagined spaces within it that are occupied by women and men. Based on 21 months of fieldwork in a former mission station located in north-west Uganda, this analysis draws upon cultural geographies of space, development, resistance and of gender and sexuality. A central tenet of the research has been the methodological strategy employed to explore the mission place. By living and working as a foreign lay missionary volunteer, I was integrated in the cross-cultural context of church and aid, while focusing my ethnographic attention on women's lives there. I also address issues of ethical concern embodied in this research.

The women of the mission place at Boraja face more complex choices in their lives today than any of the generations of women before them. During this century, forces of radical change (colonial, missionary, civil unrest) brought disruption to the 'traditional' spaces within which men and women live. I concentrate upon the changes brought by the Italian Catholic church to one of their first mission stations in the region. Conceptually, I deploy a definition of 'mission place' as being a boundary zone of conflict, compromise and contradiction. I look at the messages and the machinations of the mission place, and how these have reconstructed and redefined the 'imagined spaces' of women there. By examining communities and groups of 'religious' women and the events that surround their integration into the church-based 'development' initiatives that aim to rebuild the mission place, I identify the complex negotiated spaces that these women occupy. I look at women building identities in personal, familial and social spaces that the institutions framing their lives (church, community, family and tradition) do not explicitly recognize. I focus particularly on how the 'imagined spaces' created for local women are constructed in terms of their gender role, and how, in reality, local women adopt liminal gender roles, with both illicit and sanctioned sexual dimensions, and often appropriate these other roles to their own advantage in material terms. The imagined spaces of male clergy are also examined as I explore the gender relations involved in their relationships with women.

This thesis therefore argues for a more nuanced appreciation of the contradictions and choices that characterize women's lives in mission places. By defining the boundaries of imagined spaces in the terms of accountability which are exercised in the various cultures which inform the space, I explore the ways in which women and men of the mission test these boundaries. Particular spaces have been created within the mission place, which assume certain behaviours and characteristics and exercise accountability in these terms. These are very often connected to the implementation of development initiatives in that place. Since the construction of these missionary spaces has attempted to negate the sexual roles that these women continue to express, their negotiation of compromised and liminal gender roles with sexual dimensions often impinges upon the responsibilities that attend to their imagined missionary space. This results in compromised management of the development initiatives in which they are involved. The conclusions drawn from this research are conceptual, methodological and practical, connecting women's lives in mission places to the implementation of development projects, while drawing attention to the conflicts surrounding common expressions of sexuality which are deemed illicit there.

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I dedicate this work to them.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACAV	Associazione Centro Aicti Volontari
ADRD	Arua Diocese Recovery Development Plan
AIM	African Inland Mission
AMREF	African Medical and Research Foundation
APSO	Agency for Personal Services Overseas
BAT	British American Tobacco
BDSI	Boraja Domestic Science Institute
CA	Constituent Assembly
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CUAMM	Collegio Universitario Aspirante Medici Missionari
EATWOT	Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sport
MoFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NRM	National Resistance Movement
PLC	Parish Learning Centre
PLE	Primary Leaving Examination
PHC	Primary Health Care
PTC	Pastoral Training Centre
RC	Resistance Council
SCIAF	Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
SPLA	Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
U5MR	Under Five Mortality Rate
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Education Fund
UNLA	Uganda National Liberation Army
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
VMM	Volunteer Missionary movement
VTC	Vocational Training Centre
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WCC	World Council of Churches
YCS	Young Christians Society

Ush Ugandan shilling 1994 £1 stg = 1,500 ush

Chapter One : Introduction

1.1 Squinting

I spent a lot of my time in Uganda squinting. When I returned, the light tan on my face was broken by little white lines at the corners of my eyes, where the sun didn't reach because I'd been squinting. When friends asked, "Did Africa change you?" I would reflect on these pale untouched creases of white skin and wonder whether they represented the part of me that could never be absorbed by the warm, bright and bewildering people of Boraja¹. Or, perhaps these markings, which faded with the tan, were evidence that I had tried to adjust my vision to the sunlight, and had spent my time trying to see properly. Seen this way, my 'squint lines' represented my effort, rather than my resistance. In either sense, I squinted because the sun, much of the time, was much brighter than my Irish eyes were accustomed to. Boraja was bright, and this mattered.

A common theme in colonial and missionary literature about Africa was darkness. Europeans viewed the continent as 'dark' and constructed images, myths and policies around the process of bringing a European 'enlightenment' to this 'dark continent'. Africa contrasted with Europeans' sensibilities in every imaginable way; its people, black, 'pagan' and 'savage'. Bringing the bible, books, medicine and machinery was an essential part of shedding the light of 'progress' into the dark corners of Africa. This construction of Africa has now been soundly analysed by scholars from Africa and other colonised places, and the Victorian stereotypes of darkness and light have been reconstructed as essential tools of the colonial agenda. Contemporary scholars, development theorists and even tourists recoil from their heritage of colonialism, and make strenuous attempts to avoid representations of Africa that echo the paternalistic Victorian view.

So there I was in Boraja, squinting in the light, bright sun, talking with two parish catechists about Christianity, missionaries and mission in Boraja. When we spoke about when the missionaries had left the parish a few years earlier, I asked what

¹ The mission place in which I conducted the fieldwork on which this thesis is based.

impact their departure had made. Joseph Adima replied "Oh it was terrible. When they left, all the light went". I was dismayed to hear this from one of the most capable community leaders in Boraja, and disheartened that he should construct his regret in these terms. But then he continued, "You see, when the Combonis left, there was no free fuel for the parish generator. We tried to run it ourselves, in a co-operative, but those ones did not pay, and soon it was not running. So when Fr Spinardi left, there was no more electric light". And then he laughed.

In that moment, I became aware of the layers of representation and assumptions that existed between Joseph and I. Not only had I established codes of discourse which reflected my sensibilities, but I had extended these to Joseph, and was dismayed to hear him express regret at the missionary departure, but more so when he did do in terms of missionary 'light' and Boraja 'darkness'. With my expectations established in this way, I did not see Joseph's statement as the practical account of mission electricity that it was, but I was relieved to see that he could laugh at my 'crazy mundu' notions. It was a salutary moment for me, and I relate it at the beginning of this thesis to foreground the narratives and the analysis that I present within ultimately arising from my own 'voice', despite all my efforts to render 'Joseph's' heard.

1.2 The mission place

My analysis of the mission place attempts to deconstruct the popular academic image of such places, as far as it exists at all. The geographical idea of mission places requires further dimensions and colours to create a contemporary representation of these significant social, cultural and economic spaces. My attempt to furnish some of this depth can be interpreted as one to destabilise the existing constructions of mission places, and to reconstitute these places as negotiated spaces of identity². Ambiguity, contradiction and disjunction in my analysis demonstrate that I do not present a totalised experience of the mission place, and that the personalised sites of resistance that I choose to reveal are often unresolved and unsettling.

² See Law (1997) for a similar approach to sex bars in the Philippines.

I conceptualise the mission place in a particular way to render the analysis I draw from this one place meaningful to other such mission places, and to other lives elsewhere. Rose (1995) emphasises that a sense of place is constructed by underlying structures of power and that the boundaries around a place serve to establish outsiders and to define insiders. Both observations are pertinent in my analysis of this place.

The underlying power structure of Catholic mission places is the Roman Catholic Church, which stretches from its patriarchal global seat of power in Rome, to the bishop of Arua Diocese's house in West Nile, to the Fathers' Quarters behind the chapel in Boraja, to each of the thirty four chapels of the parish. The chapels serve Christians living in small family village clusters throughout the area, from which are drawn the children to be educated in the parish school, the daughters to be trained at 'Pedro College' at the mission, the women and babies to attend Boraja hospital and the men to work in the mission place. So while the boundary of the mission place is certainly physical – mission land is delineated by a road, a river, paths and fences – these boundaries are not solid, but riddled with streams of interest and influence as the community surrounding the mission becomes more 'Christian' and as the church of the mission place become more 'African'.

The role of the mission has changed significantly since its paternalistic origins. Where once it ferried beliefs, doctrine and dogma into the local community, its channels of influence are now conduits of aid, relief and western charity (see van Ufford 1993). For outsiders, the mission place is a 'way in', and for some local people, insiders, it is a means of escaping the life they know, a 'way out'. I see the mission as a changing, dynamic place, whose future is no longer in foreign hands, and whose function is no longer solely religious. The anthropologist Dan Rose speaks of zones of "cultural reversal", where there is complex two-way exchange of cultural ideas, norms and values (1990). He argues that:

"What is possible in the space of contact, crossing over, assimilation, appropriation, juxtaposition and fusion has not been adequately explored; indeed this space has no real name. What we know is that there are numerous

ragged zones of contact between peoples who hold incommensurable values and beliefs, traditions and philosophies.” (Rose 1990:43).

I believe the Catholic mission places of sub-Saharan Africa are representative of such zones. The cultural fusion taking place there spans the spiritual and the material, and the global and the local. I believe that rather than being the contentious location of singular western dominance, these places represent a multifaceted too-ing and fro-ing exchange of ideas, identities and influence. They are places of cultural conflict, social contradiction and of tacit compromise. This thesis concentrates upon one such place and uses the concept of ‘imagined spaces’ to address cogent issues of urgency for Ugandan women there. In doing so, I contest constructions of education, wellbeing, religious life and sexual identity, as they are experienced, explored and expressed in this place.

1.3 The research place

In my approach to the mission place of Boraja, I aim to achieve something akin to Derek Gregory’s representation of the work of Michael Watts on the ‘Yan Tatsine risings in northern Nigeria:

“(He) seeks to break open a particular ‘knotting’ within the global-local dialectic: to show how difference and identity are produced within constellations of power earthed (so to speak) in interconnected spaces and wired together by politic and economic relations; how difference and identity are contested, negotiated, and shaped through cultural struggles; and how “identity which rests on difference” can produce a common ground for politics” (Gregory, 1994:202-203).

As I attempt to break open the ‘knot’ that the mission place represents, I foreground the social and cultural identities which are “contested, negotiated and shaped” in these places. My work is set against a broad disciplinary sweep of influence. Geography and its related disciplines, which, while attentive to women’s issues in developing countries (see for example Pearson 1992 and Elson 1991), and also to the construction of women’s identities in ‘other’ cultures (see particularly Radcliffe 1996, 1996a, Moore 1994, 1996, Kesby 1996 and Law 1997), have not yet examined

the mission place, nor the particular lives that women lead in relation to such places. The religious element is an essential component of what makes mission places different to their neighbouring places, and geography's treatment of religion and religious places has been sporadic.

Notable texts by Sopher (1967) and by Gay (1971) that explored geographical aspects of religion were followed by a lacuna in research, and Park's 'Sacred Worlds' (1994) describes itself as "the first (book) in the field for two decades". Park looks anew at the relationships between geography and religion, and in presenting a synthesis of research since the 1960s, reveals a general incoherence in the work that has taken place, and also shows how little (or no) attention has been paid to women's personal religious geographies³. Theodora Carroll, in her text 'Women, Religion and Development in the Third World' (1983), addresses the ways in which different world religions have interpreted women's place in society, and how this has influenced women's 'development' as it is interpreted today. In her introduction, she also highlights the tendency of development analysts to 'avoid' religion:

"When the role and status of women in development are discussed, the issue of religion and its impact on women's traditional position is typically sidestepped. Because the subject is ultrasensitive and emotionally charged, development planners treat religion as a nonsubject"(1983:1).

Research from several fields serves to inform my concern. I agree with Quarles van Ufford (1988,1993) who notes that "Although the conventional study of development rarely looks into issues of religious transformation, religiously and secularly inspired efforts to change local society have much in common" (1993:153). And while Jeff Haynes (1996) and Paul Gifford (1998) both explore the relationship between religion and politics in modern Africa, they do not explicitly develop concepts of development or the theological element of political religion. This connection is made by David Lehman (1990) who embraces these concepts, and he has examined the

³ As Sopher (1981) identified, most geographical research on religion has fallen into four clusters - denominational geography, the landscape and spatial organisation of particular religious groups, the development of sacred centres and pilgrimage.

domain of liberation theology in its political, social and economic context in South America, analysing the profound effect of this theology on both the Catholic church in the region, and in the everyday lives of people there. Explicitly making practical connections between theology and development, Sarah White and Romy Tiongco (1997) have addressed the central issues of poverty and power from and through a theological perspective which is nonetheless materially grounded. While these scholars have helped inform and challenge my ideas, dealing with 'religion' and 'development' as they do, there remains a neglect of sexual elements in both discourses, which are of significance in mission places.

To consider women's personal geographies in the context of a religious setting (which performs a development function) at an ethnographic level of research, and then to interpret the significance of contested sexualities within this context is new ground for the geographer. I embrace this context and the inherently geographical challenge it presents.

1.4 The thesis

My approach and analysis, while focusing on one mission place at Boraja, is mindful of the essential tension that exists between the 'global' and the 'local' experience and explanation of poverty, which frames the particular experiences of life for women in Boraja. This tension, while perhaps not persistently explicit in my fieldwork analysis, establishes the theoretical context of the issues examined in this place, while concerns with matters of 'representation', 'values' and 'accountability' establish particular and political relationships between myself as author and the subjects of my research.

The concept of 'imagined spaces' is one which I define and employ in this thesis to analyse the complex social spaces that women and men in mission places occupy, negotiate and contest. These spaces are informed by the unique discursive resources of the mission place which each person draws upon to define their own space, the boundaries of which are articulated in terms of 'accountability'. These imagined spaces are expressed materially in the choices and actions of people in Boraja, and

my representation of them is through detailed narratives drawn from the everyday and the unusual of mission life in Boraja, as I observed it.

Running throughout the examination of imagined spaces for women are questions about sexuality, women's place, the 'value' of sex and the construction of identities around certain sexual codes. It is important for me to connect these questions to their practical consequences, and the narratives and analysis contained in this thesis explicitly draw upon the material practices associated with these dimensions of imagined spaces.

The chapters of the thesis are divided into three main sections. In the first of these, I establish the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of my research. Chapter 2 sets out the research context, the conceptual tools and the theoretical premises of the thesis. In doing so, the research is located at the intersection of several disciplinary foci, and the foregrounding of the significance of the *religious setting* makes it clear that it is *this* consideration that has been most neglected in attempts to understand cultural aspects of women's development in sub-Saharan Africa. The chapter addresses how contemporary mission studies take account of the postcolonial critique, but fail to consider 'development' in its religious-cultural setting. I set out my conceptualisation of 'Imagined Spaces' and their boundaries of accountability, before finally discussing the major contributing discursive resources that women in Boraja draw upon to define their imagined spaces - 'lugbara', 'development' and 'Catholic'.

The following chapter, 'Methodological Considerations' sets out the methodology I employed in order to present this analysis. This methodology is not a 'text-book' approach, and evolved with time and circumstances in the field. My belief in the 'integral' nature of research, and that any ethnography is going to be influenced by the full personhood of the person who happens to be an ethnographer is explored in this chapter. Therefore my own imagined space, and the roles and identifiers inherent in it are discussed, with the conceptual and practical implications for my research. One of the main implications of this was on my 'position', which I describe in terms

of 'oscillation' and 'retreat', making it clear that I did not hold a static position. This chapter also details the methods I used to communicate and record in the field, and how I produced my ethnography. I close this chapter with a consideration of the ethical implications of my methodology.

This second section of the thesis aims to set the scene for my analytical chapters in an empirical way drawing the reader closer to the situation of my field research. In chapter 4, I introduce the region of West Nile and the Catholic Diocese of Arua, where the fieldwork was located (see Maps 1 and 2). To establish the national and regional context of experiences in Boraja, I present statistical material on 'health', 'education' and 'women'. In 'The Bishops; Dilemmas' I discuss the scope and complexity of the problems in administering a diocese with the history, problems and confrontations of Arua. These dilemmas engage with financial, cultural, logistical, practical, theological and material issues, and bring the juxtapositioning of the 'global' and the 'local' to the fore. Finally, to draw the reader to the very local scale of the mission place at Boraja, I describe Boraja as a visitor might find it, and conduct an informal guided tour, introducing the institutions, the layout and some of the issues of the place.

Chapter 5 finds us in the area of Boraja, and in this chapter I set the scene for the analytical chapters, by describing the imagined spaces of lugbara women, and the life patterns generally led *outside* the mission compound. This discussion, which follows the life course of a lugbara woman from birth, through childhood, courtship and marriage, to death, establishes the cultural background to the changes that Christianity has brought to the area. I describe the particular places and spaces which are associated with significant meanings and occasions in a woman's life, since these frame the imagined spaces of women who become involved with the mission. In this way, I hope to describe the imagined spaces and places that the chapters in the third section immediately contest.

The third section of the thesis presents my analysis of both the everyday and the unusual, focusing in particular mission institutions and people, and the imagined

spaces of the women associated with them. In chapter 6, I explore the mission experience of 'education' for young women. The case study for this is the school where I taught, and the community of lay women who are said to 'own' the school. Through the narratives of women attending the school or working there, I present the contradictions inherent in 'educating' women from local places in the mission tradition. I identify the imagined spaces that these women occupy and contest, and present three particular imagined spaces from the 'domestic' discourse that the school represents. The negotiation of spaces by the women connected with the school have implications for the day-to-day administration of the school, and in exploring the 'accountability' of certain attitudes, actions and their consequences, I demonstrate how this situation is weighted by the powerful, patriarchal and paternalistic external control of the school.

In chapter 7, I approach another institution of the mission place, Boraja Hospital. In this chapter I explore some of the notions that surround the mission concept of 'health' and 'well being', and discuss how the hospital is a site of opportunity, contest and failure. For women, the hospital offers two distinct spaces which I discuss; 'having babies' and 'nursing', while there is an underlying conflict between medicine practices within and without the hospital. The second main element of this chapter considers the relationship between the hospital and the community of Ugandan religious sisters nearby. The hospital is said to be 'owned' by the sisters, who occupy key personnel positions in the hospital. Through narratives and stories of certain sisters in the community, connected to the hospital, I explore how their expression of womanhood, and in particular, their reconciliation with a religious life that is childless, has them occupying an alternative 'imagined space' for women, one which is marked by commitment, opportunity and compromise. Again, in terms of 'accountability, the imagined spaces of these religious women and their function in the hospital, are closely linked to the performance of the hospital in meeting local health needs. The case study of one sister, placed in a position of power through poor external management of the hospital reveals how the negotiation of her imagined space (and the celibate element of it) directly affected the hospital's performance.

The third of the analytical chapters is marked by a change in approach and perspective. In chapter 8, which directly attends to the consequences of male celibates' negotiation of their imagined spaces, I examine the gender relations involved in the contestation of these spaces. While I focus on four male priests and brothers working in West Nile, the analysis is also directed at the women who engage with these men. I examine the construction of male missionaries' (and by extension, local priests) imagined spaces as 'vulnerable' and those of local women as 'dangerous', and through narratives which follow the unfolding events of these priests' sexual lives, I deconstruct and reverse these imagined spaces. This chapter therefore considers women's' development in a broader, relational sense, while 'accountability' is analysed through several material and discursive outcomes.

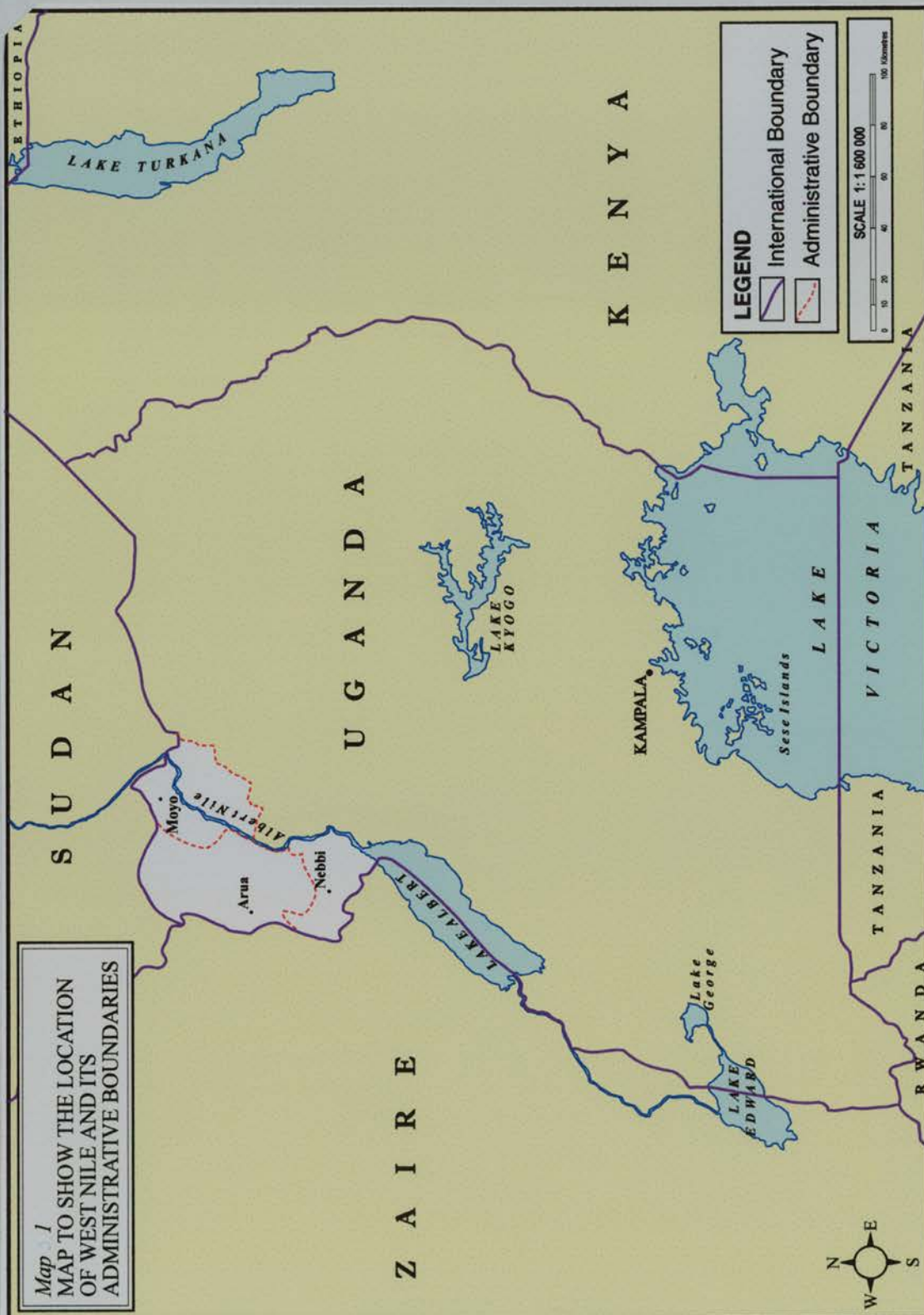
In the final chapter of the thesis, in asking whether the concept of 'imagined space' has been an effective analytical tool in this research, I draw together the ways in which the thesis has demonstrated that women in mission places are challenging and exploring their social spaces. I examine the boundaries of 'accountability' that have been constructed, and ask whether these are appropriate in this context. I endeavour to locate the areas in the research where my methodological and my theoretical perspectives complemented and contrasted with each other, and how this impacted upon my conclusions. Finally, I open up the future research possibilities that this thesis raises.

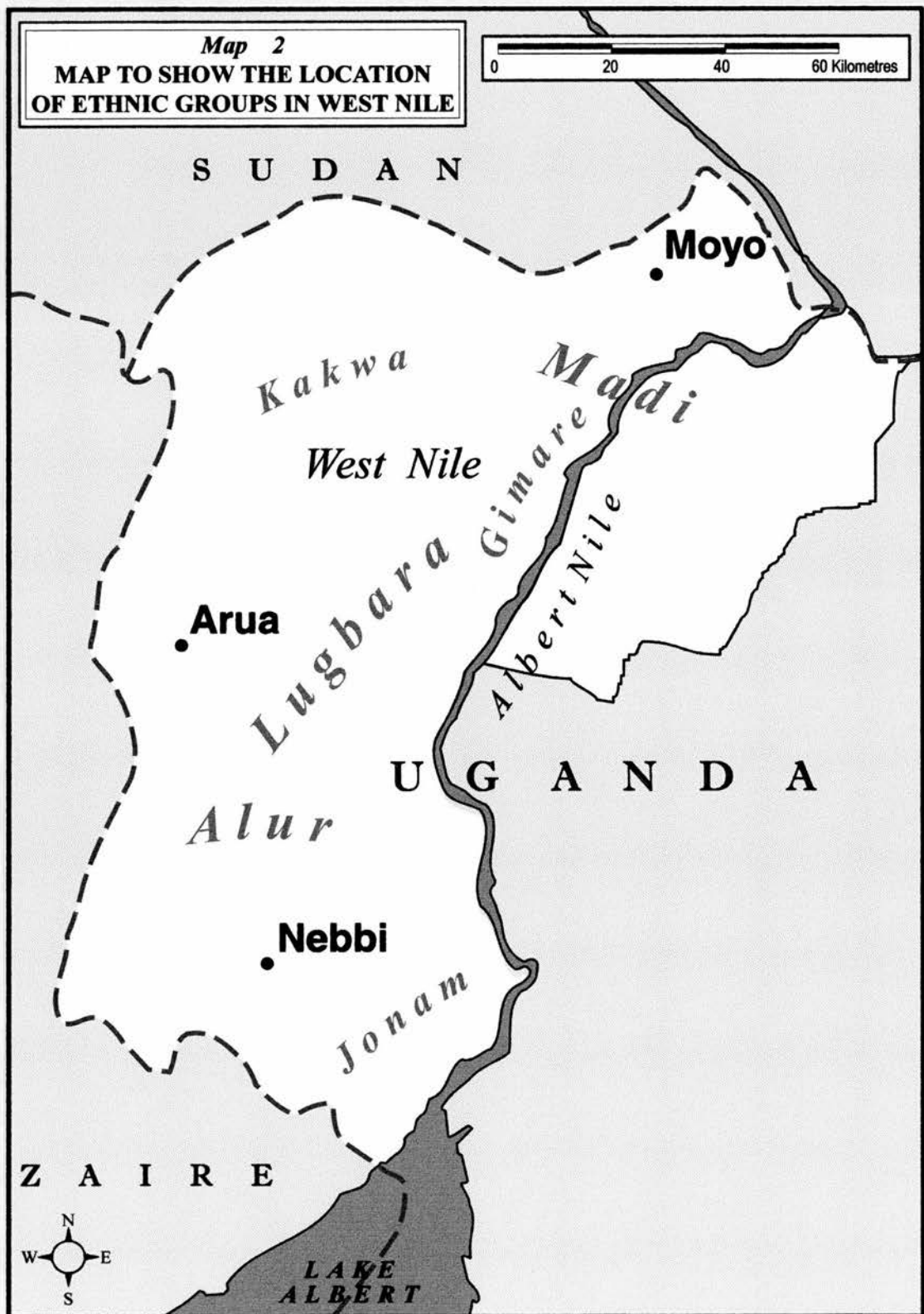
The thesis is accompanied by an annex of photographs which I have included to illustrate how women appear as they occupy and negotiate their imagined space in Boraja. Each is accompanied by some background information, but I offer these as illustrations rather than as analytical material for the thesis. Two appendices follow the annex; the first lists the informants who contributed to my research, the second sketches the colonial and missionary history of West Nile from 1863 (when the British explorer Speke visited the area) to 1962 (Ugandan independence).

1.5 Conclusion

I have had to narrow my focus and squint my way to present the main themes that feature in this thesis. That there is 'so much more' to mission life in Boraja than I present here must be obvious. However, in my search for the nuanced and unspoken elements of administering development projects for women in mission places, I came to the conclusion that the particular imagined spaces that mission women and men occupy is an essential element of understanding 'mission and development'.

Throughout this thesis I have changed the names of most of the people whose narratives I present. I have replaced names with pseudonyms which are similar (i.e. drawn from the same language), in an effort to maintain the sense of who is being discussed in terms of ethnicity. I do this because the material I present is personal to these people, and in some cases (as discussed above) I was unable to obtain their explicit permission to represent their narrative. I have maintained the names of public figures (e.g. Bishop Frederick Drandua) where they are immediately identifiable by their position. I have changed the name of the mission place to 'Boraja'.





Chapter Two: Defining the places and spaces of mission

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the research context, the conceptual tools and the underlying theoretical premises of the thesis. Its three main sections are all concerned with the inter-relation between different cultures and how these inform, condition and sustain the social spaces that women in mission places occupy. Locating my research in current academic discourse is to position it at the intersection of several disciplinary foci, and throughout my endeavour to do so, I have foregrounded my analysis of the significance of the *religious setting* above others, since I feel that it is *this* consideration that has been the most neglected in attempts to understand cultural aspects of women's development in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the first section (2.2), I argue that studies of mission culture have so far neglected to consider sexuality as an integral element of mission living, and that postcolonial literatures have neglected the religious construction of sexualities in their discussion of other cultures. As a result the mission place has been represented in ways that deny the significance of religious constructions of gender and sexual identities, and which underestimate the importance of these in the material implementation of 'development' agendas there. In addition the sparsity of ethnographic work on Catholic mission, situated in contemporary mission settings, is highlighted.

The second section (2.3) establishes the conceptual tools I employ in the thesis to analyse women's lives in mission places. Here, I define 'Imagined Spaces' and their terms of reference. Using constructions of 'communal discourse' and 'discursive repertoires' I set out what I mean by the 'Imagined Spaces' that the people of mission places occupy and negotiate, and how the boundaries of these are defined in terms of 'accountability'.

The third section (2.4) of the chapter aims to establish the key parameters guiding my identification of imagined spaces analysed in the thesis, and describes how certain

images of women drawing from the three main cultural domains of 'lugbara', 'development' and 'Catholic' carry meaning in mission places. Emphasis is placed upon the religious imagery since that is what primarily distinguishes the imagined spaces of mission places from other (secular) settings in sub-Saharan Africa.

These three sections together set the theoretical argument of my thesis, which constructs imagined spaces from several inter-related cultural and social elements.

2.2 Placing Mission

The role of the mission place has been curiously neglected in academic research on social change in colonial and postcolonial locations, despite its centrality in channeling “the colonisation of consciousness” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). Even in anthropology, as Hall (1998) noted, until the 1980s research on European missionaries in Africa was produced largely by historians and missionaries themselves. Biographies of missionaries generally related to the ‘heroic’ stories of missionary ‘adventure’, while the writing was nostalgic, often romanticising the early mission days, emphasising the physical dangers and high mortality rates faced by the missionaries. As the end of the colonial period approached, mission writing became pre-occupied with the question of the future of church policy and organisation in postcolonial government. Oliver (1952) and Taylor (1958) both engage with this question in an East African context. Oliver argues that European missionaries had “stimulated government involvement” in Africa by facilitating the imposition of colonial administration (1952: 90), and concluded that the mission “exercised the most decisive influence ... in promoting the British part in East Africa” (1952: 161). His concern for the future of the church in a postcolonial East Africa rounded on its failure to recruit its educated elite into active ministry, and the chasm which had opened between the clergy and a secular elite. Taylor (1958) too identified the gaps in the church structure which independence was revealing. In the Church of Uganda, he observed the European missionaries withdrawing from everyday pastoral ministry ‘upwards’ into administrative high-status posts, associated with emerging ‘development’ roles and reinforcing perceptions of missionaries as ‘specialists’ and ‘separate’, and implicitly ‘superior’.

Beyond such internal criticism, African fictional literatures gaining recognition in Africa and overseas frequently included mission locations and missionary characters, often with plots hinging upon colonial and missionary encounters and conflicts¹, yet the missionary remained 'absent' in anthropological studies. Sjaak van der Geest and Kirby (1992) highlighted this 'absence' in ethnography from 1930 to 1965, attributing this blindspot to a search for the exotic which ignored the missionary presence in another culture because it had contaminated the exotic with the familiar. Elsewhere he concludes that the stereotypes attached to both missionaries and anthropologists evident in many ethnographies are misleading (see, for example, Hvalkov and Aaby 1981). But recently, attendant to the move towards self-reflexivity, and in the wake of anthropology's acknowledgement of their implicit role in the colonial project (see Etherington 1983), certain anthropologists have questioned the stereotyping and caricaturing of themselves and of missionaries (Priest 1987, Stipe 1985, Keesing 1981). Salomone (1980:174) even takes anthropologists to task on their own version of 'fundamentalism', contrasting it with Christian missionaries and believes that "missionaries are easier to see through than anthropologists because the latter claim to be without presuppositions".

While the places and peoples of mission were not attracting academic attention, 'the churches' and their role in the colonial project were. With independence, African historians highlighted the extent to which nineteenth century European missions both facilitated and were facilitated by the expansion of colonial rule, and their work inspired a critical reassessment of mission research².

It was only in 1982 that the first detailed research on European missions by anthropologists appeared. Beidelman's (1982) ethnographic account of an Anglican

¹ Examples included Achebe (1958, 1974) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1965, 1977).

² In 1968, the International African Institute Seminar highlighted several themes in which research or aspects of missionary culture should be expanded. These included the assumptions and aims of the home bases on missionary societies and the extent of control emanating from the home mission; the processes of syncretism and conversion; the economies of missions and the motives and methods of missionaries (Baeta 1968:xiii). Of these it was 'syncretism and conversion' that attracted most subsequent work (see Horton 1971), and anthropologists focused on 'traditional' belief systems or the ways in which Africans 'converted' foreign beliefs into their own indigenous forms.

It was only in 1982 that the first detailed research on European missions by anthropologists appeared. Beidelman's (1982) ethnographic account of an Anglican mission in Kenya, and Clifford's (1982) biography of Maurice Leenhardt in New Caledonia established some foundation for subsequent work. Ethnographic studies have concentrated in particular on the several processes of 'conversion' that took place in the colonial missions, illustrating how the legitimisation of colonial practices only occurred through cultural practices there. In some contexts, conversion to forms of modernity in the mission was apparent in new 'imaginings of community'. Van Rooden (1996) examined these in terms of the separation of public and private, Van der Veer (1994) in terms of the interiorisation of belief and the privatisation of conversion, and Jean and John Comaroff (1992), place these in the context of a globalised mission culture. Most ethnographic research on Christianity has instead considered the 'cults' and 'sects' of Independent African Christianity (Sundkler 1961, Peel 1968, Fabian 1971 have become seminal works), which perhaps reflects a lingering anthropological taste for what is perceived to be 'different' and 'local', rather than confronting a dimension of those institutions rather closer to 'our own' cultural position.

Sanneh (1991:22) argues that the European missionaries on the nineteenth century were wholly modernising forces, and that their "spiritual values were assumed to enshrine concrete western forms". He highlights the cultural meanings of material connections between missionaries and their 'motives and practices', calling into question whether missionaries were able to distinguish between culture and religion. However Sanneh displays the tendency, criticised by Beidelman (1974) and Hall (1998) to generalise about missionaries, and it was this that ethnographers of mission have sought to contest. Beidelman for instance (1982) argues that the diverse social identities of missionaries informed the mission encounter although he understates the importance of the domestic history of missionary societies. Etherington (1977) meanwhile emphasises the importance of taking into account African representations of mission social identities as well as missionaries' representations of themselves.

At this point it is appropriate to consider the postcolonial discourse from which such

arguments spring³. Insofar as 'postcolonial' is a term resonant with all the ambiguity and complexity of the many different cultural experiences it implicates, it addresses "all the aspects of the colonial process from the beginning of colonial contact" (Ashcroft *et al* 1995:2), and so parallels in large measure the missionary experience in Africa. The position of the missionary within the colonial context has been revealed as complex and often contradictory (Beidelman 1982, Comaroff and Comaroff 1991), and the tendency to 'pin down' their role in the colonial project has often resulted in the stereotyping of the missionary (Hall 1998). Recent studies have argued that representations of Africa produced by missionaries were facilitated by and became part of a western colonial cultural hegemony (Hall 1998:58), and recognise that the churches, the colonial administrations, the home missions, the missionary societies and the colonial projects of nineteenth century Europe all offer 'institutional' models that must be articulated within the colonial context of power and politics.

It is important therefore to briefly lay out some of the main arguments of the postcolonial theory before situating them in the 'mission' literature. The essential problem seminally articulated by Said in (1978) is that all knowledge has inescapable political connotations and that the production of colonial 'minds and bodies' has been central to the colonial project (Corbridge 1992). Said (1978:3) argued that Europeans managed the 'Orient' through representing it "politically, sociologically, militarily, scientifically and imaginatively". As ideas in the west about the 'Orient' are entirely constructed by the colonial agenda, in terms of what served its interests for both the west (the self) and the 'Orient' (the other) to know, the same premise can be applied to the other colonial territories of the European industrial era, including sub-Saharan Africa. Production of knowledge is now identified as an essentially powerful tool of the colonial project, and therefore something to be deconstructed in this postcolonial era of fragmenting truths and questioning of hegemonies.

³ Postcolonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds, and Ashcroft *et al* (1995:2) describe it as including "migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy, and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being".

In this way, the 'other' acquired sets of values and characteristics produced by the western 'self'. In the first place, the 'other' was what the west did not consider itself to be - backward, unreasonable, exotic, idle and promiscuous. Then secondly, and as Homi Bhabha (1984) went on to argue, the west's anxieties about itself became displaced to form another 'other' - the untouched, pure, and in African terms, 'noble savage' who had not yet fallen from grace. Bhabha (1989) makes the connection between this representation of the 'other' and how 'development' is viewed and achieved. He argues that the questions around what development 'is' must be preceded by questions on 'who' asks 'whom' about development, in whose terms and language, and who is being listened to. The 'gaze' of the 'developer' must at least be matched by that of the 'developee', and should be carried through every stage of analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation of 'development' initiatives. Said (1979), Bhabha (1989) and Spivak (1988) have all identified the predominant gaze as being western, colonialist, male, capitalist ... and so the response to the challenge that this identification presents is for the 'others' to articulate their own gazes. To counter the Eurocentrism directed at Africa, the 'Afrocentricity' school has grown to reject "looking whitely through a tunnel lit with the artificial beams of Europe" (Asante 1985:6), and a wide body of discourse has emerged to question and counter much of what has been written and understood of the colonised, the coloniser and the colonisation of the continent.

In this light, and since I am thus sensitised to issues of representation in particular, can I claim this thesis as one that responds to this postcolonial critique? Is this, in other words, a 'postcolonial thesis'? Not yet. It remains that my research and analysis, the ways in which I write and 'produce knowledge' are essentially colonising moves. While I may situate my analysis within a postcolonial perspective, this position is rendered ambiguous and ambivalent by virtue of my own position. As a white woman in a western academic institution conducting solitary research on 'others' in Africa, I am part of a neo-colonial dynamic, that perpetuates imbalances of representation and of power even while expressing deep unease about this process of 'othering'. Perhaps it is impossible for Ph.D researchers to situate their work elsewhere (Sidaway 1992, Katz 1992), and perhaps all research by westerners on

African mission remains (however uncomfortably) part of this neo-colonial dynamic.

Consider the work of Jean and John Comaroff (1985,1989,1991,1992,1993).

Although their writing is firmly located in a Marxist discourse opposed to the inequalities of the power relations of Southern Africa, and is considered one of several 'ethnographies of resistance' that emerged in the late 1980s (Hall 1998), it cannot represent the 'subaltern' voice, should it wish to be heard (see Spivak 1988). Nevertheless, they write powerfully and politically from 'where they are'. Their exploration of the encounter between British non-conformist missionaries and the Southern Tswana peoples of the South African frontier traces the social and cultural backgrounds of both parties. In the context of the rise of European 'modernity' and the colonial impulse, of British notions of the 'savage' and of the complex world of the precolonial African interior, Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) show how the evangelists' attempts to change the signs and practices of the Southern Tswana produced new forms of consciousness in both the coloniser and the colonised.

They examine religion in terms of a cultural system considered as the "site of struggle, a contested terrain of symbolic and material practices" (Moore 1997:89). Their treatment of the spiritual and material domains of mission together (also evident in Sanneh 1991), and of the 'conversions' of consciousness that were observed as layered and fluid resonates with my own research. However, their work draws to a much greater extent on historical ethnography than mine, and the contemporary political context of Southern Africa lends an urgent perspective that is not so relevant to postcolonial Uganda, so the similarities in our work are thus limited.

Also, I draw upon experience of a Catholic mission, a 'mainstream' Christian denomination church operating upon a much broader set of influences and institutions than the Comaroff's Methodist subject. As Green (1993) noted, despite its numbers and reach, the Catholic church has received relatively little attention in mission ethnography (but see Donovan 1978, Green 1993 and Tanner 1967 as exceptions). Furthermore, ethnographies which engage with contemporary mission

places are rare, with most work drawing on historical missionary records and their colonial implications (see Bowie *et al* 1993, Balinsky 1991). While it is the religious setting which distinguishes mission places from other locations where colonial agency has effected radical social change, how women experience this change is marked in terms of gender and sexuality in any place. However, in the religious setting of mission places, the ways in which Christian women have been shaped and 'developed', both in the past and in the present, is intrinsically bound up in the cultural elements of Christianity. I would argue that while mission literature now takes account of its postcolonial dimensions, and as postcolonial theory now incorporates some awareness of the missionary endeavour, mission studies do not yet embrace how mission, in its postcolonial context, has effected a gendered and sexualised experience of change for women.

2.2.1 Mission women

To take account of how Christian women in Africa have been shaped by missionary cultures, it is important to consider the roles early European missionary women occupied, and how these roles were replicated or adapted by African women. Studies such as Robert (1996) and the collection edited by Bowie *et al* (1993) have placed 'mission women' in fresh theoretical perspective, taking account of both the postcolonial and the patriarchal structures that conditioned their lives, setting out how early missions established patterns of both opportunity and restraint for mission women⁴.

During the 'Golden Age' of Victorian mission to Africa (see Hastings 1976, 1994), women played a pivotal role in the 'success' of Christian mission. Protestant women generally either accompanied their husbands to mission fields and lived as dutiful mothers, wives and daughters, or went alone as 'spinster' teachers⁵. Caricatures of "the exhausted wife, and the frustrated old maid" (Robert 1996 :xvii) carry some truth, but marginalise the contribution of these women to the central task of evangelism, a role ascribed to men

⁴ By 'mission women' I mean both women who served as expatriate missionaries, and local women who became involved in mission life.

⁵ A few served as Anglican missionary sisters (see Swaisland 1993).

(Kirkwood 1993, Williams 1993). Women missionaries concentrated their efforts largely on caring for their families, maintaining a household in challenging material circumstances, offering hospitality and providing teaching and nursing services to local women and children. Concentrating on these tasks and on these groups was formally endorsed as a policy of 'Women's Work for Women', a strategy employed by most mission agencies sending women overseas in the nineteenth century⁶. As wives and teachers, women missionaries did not write theoretical treatises on mission as their husbands did, but recorded their mission world and work in letter, diaries, memoirs and informal documentation, which have only relatively recently been recognised for their historical and evangelical value. Women such as Mary Slessor⁷, Harriet Newell⁸, Ann Judson⁹, Mary Hill¹⁰ and Christina Coillard¹¹ had significant impact on women in the sending and receiving societies. Going overseas as missionaries opened up new opportunities and challenges for women in the strict social confines of Victorian Europe and North America.

The Catholic option for women in mission was limited to joining a congregation of Missionary Sisters. It was during the nineteenth century that France, Germany, Ireland and Italy established congregations of missionary sisters to travel to mission fields to engage in education, medical care and 'works of mercy'. The women's congregations often paralleled the expansion of missionary priests and brothers, and like Protestant women missionaries, were engaged in carving out a gender-based sphere of work in the Church. Choosing to be a missionary sister offered a less

⁶ See Robert 1996, especially Chapter 4.

⁷ Mary Slessor was a Scottish Presbyterian missionary who established extensive mission works in Calabar, West Africa in the early eighteenth century (see Buchan 1980).

⁸ Harriet Newell was the wife of an American missionary, who died aged 19 in tragic circumstances in 1812. Her memoirs inspired many young American women to become 'missionary wives' (see Chapter 2, Robert 1996)

⁹ Ann Judson was a contemporary of Harriet Newell who survived many years of missionary service with her Baptist husband in Calcutta. Her name became a household word in the United States as she battled to save him from Indian prisons, and her missionary life was varied and exacting. She died aged 38 (see Chapter 2, Robert 1996).

¹⁰ Mary Hill was a missionary wife who worked in India from 1821 to 1847, raising five children and establishing several schools before dying at the age of 57 (see Cunningham 1993).

¹¹ Christina Coillard (was a Scottish Baptist who worked for 30 years in Southern Africa alongside her missionary husband. His account of her life (discussed in Kirkwood 1993) emphasised how she was

cloistered lifestyle than most European religious communities. Catholic Sisters stood as an example of a completely alternative role for African women, a role in which there was no brideprice, no 'ownership', educational opportunities, a comfortable lifestyle, no children and no husband. Attracted by the redefinition of their 'value', as well as a sense of vocation, African women were eager to join congregations of Sisters, and indigenous orders of Catholic sisters were rapidly established across Africa.

The impact of missionaries from these Victorian beginnings on African women is manifold and continuing. A few scholars have worked towards describing and explaining this impact, but again in ways that seek to reveal expressions of female African Christianity which are peripheral to mainstream church practices (as in McCormick Maaga 1995, examining women in Aladura churches of West Africa), or in ways that fail to take account of the material and 'developmental' implications of gendered religious roles.

An important exception is Ruth Marshall's 'Power in the name of Jesus' (1991) which addresses the issues of gender, sexuality and the connections between the material and the spiritual dimensions of contemporary Christianity in Africa. In these respects, our work shares common ground. Setting her work within the broader conceptual domain of scholars such as Mbembe (1988) and Eboussi-Boulaga (1991), who engage with the appropriation and reconstruction of foreign doctrines and institutions in Nigeria, she focuses on the specific innovations and reinventions emerging in this creative process (1991:21). Concentrating on the 'Pentecostals' in the Christian churches of Nigeria, Marshall draws on the interaction between a material 'doctrine of prosperity' and a spiritual 'doctrine of salvation'. She argues that Pentecostals present a conceptual challenge to the state "for the creation of autonomous spaces of practice which defy the oppressive logic of current power monopolies", and that they are articulating new strategies, power relations and opportunities for 'survival' (1991:21).

not merely complementary to his work, but a central and essential element of it.

Drawing, like many anthropologists before her on the process of 'conversion', she focuses on 'born-again' in urban contexts, concentrating especially on born-again women. She distinguishes between male and female motivations in being 'born-again', and agrees with Iyayi (1982) that women have little reason for protecting the status quo, and are more likely to seek strategies for bettering their everyday lives. Here, she clearly connects women's religious choices with their material circumstances, and specifies further that "it is particularly in the spheres of marriage, family and sexuality that one finds the born-again doctrine and practice not only transforming them quite dramatically, but do so in ways that are highly attractive to young urban women" (Marshall, 1991:29).

In 'Power in the name of Jesus', Marshall details the ways in which born-again codes of sexual and moral conduct appeal to women who find little attraction in 'traditional' Yoruba cultural norms. Born-again codes contest normative practices and attitudes towards courtship, marriage, adultery, divorce, childlessness and inter-ethnic unions, for both men and women, and it is especially women in the community who "have been able to regain a remarkable degree of relative control over their sexuality" (1991:30). Marshall describes the innovations wrought by born-again doctrine as both conceptually and practically "dramatic and socially significant" (1991:32), acknowledging that they also undermine many patron-client networks and weaken the role of the extended family.

My focus on a mainstream church mission in a *rural* Ugandan location necessarily brings different political, cultural and social considerations to bear, as does my concern for communities of religious men and women whose sexuality is defined in relation to *celibacy*. Also, the connection between the material and the spiritual doctrines of well-being are fundamentally different in a Catholic context. Rather than a doctrine of 'prosperity', the post-Vatican II theologies and practices of liberation and inculturation stream through church doctrine into church development in Boraja. Still, while the business of 'how to save souls' may remain distinct from that which Marshall describes, I welcome her recognition that religious cultures impact upon both the spiritual and the material lives of African women in ways that can be

transformative. In considering how I might conceptualise these roles and places, images and spaces that Catholic women in Boraja mission carry and occupy, I bear in mind Marshall's (1991:32) description of young born-again women in urban Nigeria:

"They find in these communities an opportunity to construct a space in which they can move with relative freedom and dignity, to gain control over their sexual and family lives, and from there use their positions to gain more influence in the sphere of labour outside the home"

2.3 Imagined Spaces

Several distinct theoretical and methodological orientations have been distilled in my approach to this research. First, I subscribe to an epistemological commitment that draws on 'everyday lives' as a resource for analysing society. Secondly, I interpret these everyday life experiences by 'mapping' them onto broader social processes. To do so requires an analytical concept that offers structure and explanatory power in the interpretation of individual lives of people in mission, without diluting the contradictory and nuanced complexity of these lives. Exploring strategies employed by others to 'capture' and 'give voice' to the other, I have considered, among others, 'third spaces' (Bhabha 1990, Pile 1994, Soja 1996, Law 1997), 'imaginative geographies' (Gregory 1994), 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1991), 'communal discourses' (McClintok 1995, Nagar 1995) and 'discursive repertoires' (Frankenberg 1993), and draw upon several of these to construct the 'imagined spaces' of mission lives in Boraja.

That people occupy social spaces bounded by 'invisible' or 'imagined' demarcations is an essential premise of social theory, and one which underlies this thesis. My attempt to map these mission spaces echoes the work of several theorists and requires consideration of fundamental issues in the production of knowledge such as 'subjective', 'structure' and 'agency'. Benedict Anderson (1991)¹² proposed a definition of the nation as "an imagined political community", referring to the invention of nations and the style in which they are imagined when all the members

¹² The first edition of his text was published in 1983.

do not know each other. He proposed that “all communities ... are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined” (1991:6). Although his work examined the creation and global spread of the 'imagined communities' of nationality, and was about the personal and cultural feeling of belonging to a nation, it was seminal in establishing a conceptual foundation towards understanding 'imagined' communities more generally and I refer to it in this light. Anderson's foregrounding of the 'imagined' in the definition of social 'belonging' established the power of the non-material in the construction of nationalism. The significance of 'nationalism' in the creation of identities, can, I believe, be compared to that of religion, whereby communally constructed codes of 'belonging' to certain religious categories accrue 'real' value (a notion to which I will return below).

In conceptualising social spaces occupied by mission women, binary or polar categories were inadequate for understanding the complexity of identities and roles in mission places. At the same time, various dualisms circulate in the everyday discourse of Boraja, including, for example the notions of 'traditional' and 'modern', which might be applied to religious practice, dress codes, learning processes, marriage rites and so on. However, when local people in Boraja used these terms, as they often did, it became clear that each carried several meanings. 'Traditional' marriage rites might refer to those practiced before West Nile was colonised, or similarly to non-Christian rites practiced today which may involve payments of cash to reimburse the bride's family for any medical treatments she has received before marriage. 'Modern' on the other hand, might simultaneously refer to pre-Vatican II Latin church liturgies and practices, as well as liberation-inspired inculturated prayers and rituals of recent years. Indeed, 'modern' church vesture is fashioned from 'traditional' 'African' cloth (manufactured in China or India), while 'traditional' vesture is made from white rayons and polyesters from Italy. Another dualism in discursive usage refers to appropriate male and female roles and behaviours. While the basic categorisation of gender is unquestioned, these ascribed values are precisely the elements of this dualism that I engage with. Local understandings of these notions are crucial to my analysis, and in this sense therefore, I 'deal with' and

problematise such categorisations rather than reject them.

My unease with such categorisations reflects a broader disciplinary move in social analysis towards an awareness of variegated and shifting relations (see Bondi 1992). As gender, class, race and key social categories have been reconstructed beyond binary and bi-polar identifiers, arguments for a new geometry of knowledge, a 'third space' have emerged (Bhabha 1990, Pile 1994, Soja 1996, Law 1997). Soja describes it as a critical strategy of "thirding-as-othering" (1996), and I resist the 'thirding', no matter how inclusive or fluid it claims to be. I conceptualise the social spaces *within* a social setting, rather than conceptualise the setting itself (as either one, the other or another). I seek instead a concept that might embrace both the alignments and the deviations from these categorisations. The mission is not a 'third space' as I see it, but the men and women of the mission place occupy social spaces that encompass fluid dimensions of identity, and it is these 'imagined spaces' available to them, to occupy and negotiate that I embrace.

In doing so, I echo the strategy of Sarah Radcliffe (1994, 1996, 1996a), who, like Benedict Anderson works with conceptualisations of national identities. In 'Gendered Nations', Radcliffe (1996) focuses on the complex gendered imaginative geographies of the nation and the multiple ways in which the nation constitutes gendered subjectivities. Her work in Ecuador draws on Anne McClintock's work (1993) on how the temporality of a nation is gendered, and she identifies three arenas in which gendered imaginative geographies of Ecuadorian women have been created - nostalgia, development and territory. National discourses surround these representations of women and are powerful forces in the national agenda, and Radcliffe suggests that such 'taken for granted' representations of woman and womanhood, should be examined by feminist geographers, with both political and academic agendas to pursue.

However, in Boraja it is the cultural-religious setting rather than the political setting that I explore as significant, while acknowledging the inter-relationship between the missionary and colonial projects, and the 'church and state' in contemporary Uganda.

For either, an essential role is played by 'communal discourse' in the construction of 'imagined spaces'. 'Communal discourses' are the frameworks of reference through which "the world is made meaningful and intelligible to oneself and others" springing from a 'community' defined by 'social boundaries' (Johnston *et al* 1994:136). They are the means through which (and evidence of) communities are imagined. Social boundaries exist as "dynamic and fluid" lines of demarcation to establish 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in a given context, and it is the communal discourses which embed such boundaries which naturalise and legitimise them (Nagar 1995:49). People belong to social groupings through various 'membership criteria', and the boundaries which define social groupings are constructed through power relations along a number of axes (for example, nationality, religion, gender, sexuality, age) (Somers 1992, Nagar 1995).

Before elaborating further the notion of boundaries, I wish to draw upon another 'imaginative' concept which complements 'communal discourse' in my conceptualisation of imagined spaces. Ruth Frankenberg (1993), in her explanation of 'whiteness' as a social construct used the concept of 'discursive repertoires' to characterise the way in which "clusterings of discursive elements" circulated in modes of thinking on race in the narratives of individual women (1993:16). Each woman performed her own 'repertoire' which was informed by an individual set of influences and knowledges. The religious setting of mission places structures the individual choices available to men and women in ways that channel their 'discursive repertoires' into a variety of what I call 'imagined spaces'. These spaces retain the implied contrariness and idiosyncrasy of the 'repertoire' and are there to be occupied, negotiated and contested.

To clarify: the religious setting of the mission place has created certain imagined spaces and boundaries that do not exist in other (secular) places in the same way. The mission place community is differentiated into several social spaces which co-exist in parallel. People occupy these spaces through a variety of choices, made with varying degrees of freedom. These spaces are continually evolving - those that exist now are not the same as those of twenty or two hundred years ago in West Nile.

Change is brought to imagined spaces by a combination of religious and social factors. The spaces are not differentiated along binary lines of difference, although each may accommodate elements of dualistic codifications.

Therefore, the imagined space available to an African religious sister may define her as 'female', 'modern', 'educated' and 'celibate' when drawing from dominant elements of communal discourse, while her own discursive repertoire adds that she (being childless) is not considered wholly a 'woman' by her family, that she is liturgically 'traditional', well-educated in academic skills but poorly trained in housekeeping, and that her 'celibacy' is open to negotiation. Both 'scenarios' still rest within the imagined space of the African religious sister because this space embraces the normative and the exploration of the normative by individuals within the space.

Rather than questioning how 'real' these imagined spaces may be, it is appropriate to establish whether these are idioms or images which people actually use in mission places, and in the sense discussed in Frankenberg's 'discursive repertoires' (1993). Mission people certainly did not talk of their 'imagined spaces' explicitly, although I believe they did implicitly. The differentiation between social spaces in the religious place was established by the Church. Its identifiers and roles were set clearly into 'religious' and 'lay', and these categories carried fixed labels of gender and sexuality, all of which carry measures of accountability. Each carries a set of material conditions in life, in a sense 'part of the package' of belonging to that imagined space. Around these basic categories and differentiations, a set of imagined spaces has grown. The spaces are 'real' in the sense that individuals in one space may be included in diocesan discourse (and receive certain invitations, correspondence and information) while others may be excluded, and people are aware of these categories. Local people talk metaphorically of 'stepping over the boundary', or of 'going too far', in relation to the activities of individuals rupturing the boundaries of their imagined spaces, so I would argue that there is a shared awareness of these social boundaries, albeit no mention of 'imagined spaces'.

The outer boundaries of the space are really only highlighted when they are

threatened or transgressed. While communal discourse informs the understood limitations to choices and decisions, it is the individual, exercising a degree of agency within the social structures available to her, who stretches the elasticity of the space. Whether she succeeds in changing the space internally or whether she has to leave the imagined space depends on a variety of factors. In this way it is not appropriate to label an imagined space a 'space of resistance' because it most often is not. While resistance may and often does occur within this space, it does not characterise the space. The space is rather one of constant negotiation, with only occasional (but significant) flashes of dissent at the boundary as an individual's discursive repertoire does ignite resistance.

In this thesis I have also ascribed 'imagined spaces' to certain inanimate objects, namely a grotto and a pair of gates. This is intentionally experimental, and illustrates how objects and locations acquire meanings in social settings that inform communal discourse, may be integral in individual discursive repertoires and which are important in places.

The analytical power of the concept of imagined space lies in its construction of social spaces which accommodate the communal and individual discourses of a particular setting and identifies the boundaries of these in terms of accountability, as they evolve. Imagined spaces map the ways in which structure and agency work and conflict for individuals who share religious identifiers, and operate various and related cultural registers of accountability.

The drawbacks of this conceptualisation are mainly to do with its limited application to any one setting at a time. The imagined spaces of the mission place cannot be contrasted easily with those of another type of setting (for example a secular expatriate community) because the imagined spaces of the mission are constructed on its religious premise. This method is therefore most appropriate for exploring spaces within settings, rather than comparing spaces between settings. The imagined spaces of one mission place will differ from those of another mission place, but the illumination of the 'religious' as commonly significant to both will strengthen their

comparative values. Also, in the mission place, important roles are played by people who enter the social setting from 'outside'. The impact of these outsiders is often to add the *frisson* of contention or disruption to the communal discourse of the mission place, an essential element of the exploratory 'discursive repertoire' of people occupying their own imagined spaces, and being held accountable to its norms.

2.3.1 Boundaries and Accountability

If communal discourse informs and qualifies the 'membership criteria' of any imagined space, and if it is the individual's infringement of these criteria that tests the boundary, how are these criteria expressed? To 'belong' to this imagined community, a person is required to adhere to core normative values, and behaviours beyond this are what promise to extend the criteria or threaten to expel the member. The attendant measure of 'being held accountable' is what must define the criteria and the elasticity of the boundaries – which immediately brings into question essential understandings of 'to whom?' and 'from whose standpoint?'.

The notion of accountability is therefore what I use in this thesis to define the boundaries of the imagined spaces I discuss. Drawing on John Heritage's (1984) analysis of Garfinkel's 'Ethnomethodological' position on language and its use in social reality, my use of the concept is in defining 'difference' and the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Heritage emphasises the issue of "understanding language" (1984:139) as actions which are constructively interpreted in relation to their contexts, an argument which has been perhaps accommodated in recent discourse on 'situated knowledges'. However, it is his discussion of how opinions circulate within social and cultural boundaries which create and legitimise them, engendering an arena of accountability for the speakers that is significant. This is what West and Fenstermaker elaborate upon in 'Doing Difference' (1995), where they aim to reconceptualise 'difference' as an "ongoing interactional accomplishment" (p.8). This 'rolling' concept of situated and reflexive attitudes and activities, where "members of society routinely characterise activities in ways that take notice of those activities ... and place them in a social framework" (1995:21) is how I describe 'imagined spaces' too. In this way, the boundaries of imagined spaces

are where people (their opinions and behaviours) are held to account. This accountability has several dimensions integral to its “taking notice of itself” – it is relevant to activities that both conform to and deviate from prevailing normative conceptions ; it allows people to conduct their activities in relation to their circumstances in ways that take these circumstances into account, and the process of rendering something accountable is both interactional and institutional in character (West and Fenstermaker 1995:21). While West and Fenstermaker use Heritage’s (1984) working of ‘accountability’ to reconceptualise how difference in gender, race and class are distinguished, I use it to define the boundaries of the imagined spaces of mission places. It is appropriate for this purpose in its essential premise that when “members of society know their actions are accountable, they will design their actions in relation to how they might be seen and described by others” (West and Fenstermaker 1995:25). It is an inherently social conceptualisation of these boundaries, and accommodates individual agency expressed in discursive repertoires as part of a communal discourse, to mobilise social spaces.

People in Boraja are ‘held accountable’ along a variety of cultural registers which characterise the imagined space they occupy. The terms of accountability may be ‘Catholic’, ‘lugbara’ or ‘development’, and it is the dimensions of gender and sexuality within each of these that I explore as being particularly contested and fluid. It is important to state that the communal discourse which informs the imagined space, and the understanding of ‘accountability’ which defines its boundaries in an ongoing and relational way, are together sensitised to the multiplicity of cultural perspectives that articulate the space. My interpretation of the various forms and contests of ‘accountability’ that occur in the mission place revolves around practical expressions of the concept, which necessarily involve considerations of position and representation. For instance, one interpretation of ‘accountability’ in the mission place carries an assumption that the donor and the benefactor of project monies share common values of ethical responsibility, which are in effect defined in the (western) terms of the donor. In the cases of the four men whose stories I examine, and of the women whose lives these men affected, I address broader issues of accountability within several dimensions of imagined spaces, which draw attention to the exercise

of responsibility beyond the mission place at Boraja, and also to a very final and mortal form of accountability, in the form of the HIV virus.

2.4 The parameters of women's imagined spaces in Boraja

Having set up my research milieu and identified the gaps in existing knowledge which I address, and detailed the conceptual tools I will use in my analysis, it remains for me to establish the broad characteristics of the imagined spaces available to women at the mission at Boraja.

I identify three main 'cultural' contributors to women's imagined spaces in Boraja, springing from three quite distinct discursive sources: the local lugbara culture, the contemporary development culture, and the culture attendant to the Roman Catholic church. These cultures are not separate and distinct when manifest in imagined spaces, and at times it is difficult to distinguish the discursive root of a characteristic of an imagined space; however, each carries assumptions and definitions for women which are gendered and sexualised. In this section, I will briefly discuss the lugbara and development cultural contributions, and elaborate upon the Catholic dimension to a greater degree, since it characterises what is particular to the religious setting of mission places.

2.4.1 Lugbara

Lugbara culture is complex and dynamic, and the ways in which lugbara women 'own' 'mould' and 'live' it are detailed beyond my knowing. Many of the elements of lugbara culture which inform the imagined spaces of mission women are held in common with other ethnic groups in northern Uganda and indeed in East Africa. Social practices such as naming rituals, rites of maturation, marriage and death have been analysed for their 'meaning' in terms of how they situate and 'value' women (James 1993, Kayongo-Male & Onyango 1984, Nzita & Mbaga-Niwampa 1993, Olowo-Freers & Barton 1992). Recent research has begun to take account of the spatial elements of cultural practice for women. James (1993) and House-Midamba & Ekechi (1995) analyse the marketplace and what it 'means' to women in Africa, while Moore's (1996) anthropological study of the Marakwet of Kenya focuses on

the relationship between the organisation of household space and gender relations, also analysing how a Marakwet's "position in space is signaled by one's relative location on the Cherangani escarpment" (1996:xi). This is not the 'spatiality' I explore in imagined spaces, but the spatial domains occupied by lugbara women at various stages of their lives are significant in the analysis of their imagined spaces. 'Lugbara' practices, customs, rituals, places and movements are certainly not "neutral", "fixed" nor "static" (Moore 1996:x) and in Chapter 4, I explore the discursive elements of women's lives 'in the village' to illustrate how they contribute to the articulation of imagined spaces within the mission.

2.4.2 Development

People in Boraja have been experiencing 'development projects' for many years, and quite apart from the success or failure of the projects in meeting their 'development' objectives, people have been exposed to a 'development' agenda with its own discourse, and now draw on 'development' as a resource in itself as they construct their imagined spaces. For women, their multiple 'roles', and concepts such as 'empowerment' and 'capacity-building' have been mobilised as discursive resources by their exposure to development.

Research on women in low-income third world households (Rogers 1980, Maguire 1984, Young et al 1981, Beneria 1981, Beneria and Sen 1981) and on gender relations generally (Scott and Tilly 1982, Barrett 1980) has produced an extensive knowledge base which encompasses the 'universally agreed' central problematic of the power-based subordination of women to men, and the gender divisions of labour that embody and perpetuate this subordination (Moser 1993:28). By focusing on women's roles within different types of social settings, analysts hoped to identify crucial areas where change could be effected to improve women's lives¹³. Women's roles became the pivot of much development analysis, with particular attention paid to the 'domestic cycle' (Epstein 1982). The 'Triple Roles Framework' developed by Moser draws attention to the multiplicity of demands on women's time and to the implications for planning that women's struggle to balance these triple roles

¹³ Anker *et al* (eds) (1982) for example, discuss the interrelationship between women's roles and

constitute. The triple roles identified are 'Productive', 'Reproductive' and 'Community Management'. Kabeer offers an alternative approach, a 'social relations framework' which aims to "rethink" (Kabeer 1993:299) existing policy approaches, concepts and tools from a gender perspective, to inject 'gender-awareness' into every level of planning strategy. Buvinic (1983 and 1986) identified three main policy approaches to Third World women - Welfare, Equity and Anti-Poverty, to which Moser added another two categories - Efficiency and Empowerment (1993), and which White and Tiongco precede with 'Population Control' (1997). The terminologies (if not always the philosophies) of these policy approaches regularly emerge in communal discourses of places where development initiatives are active.

One of these, the notion of 'empowerment' of women has been increasingly a part of the gender and development discourse for the past ten years or so (Afshar 1998), although it has been rather "ill-defined" (Rowlands 1998:16). It has drawn strength from Molyneaux's (1985) and Moser's (1989) distinction between practical and strategic gender interests, and as Rowlands argues has enabled a "pragmatic" strategy to tackle gender and development issues in the context of existing programmes and projects "without losing sight of the fundamental changes required to truly tackle gender inequalities" (1998:17). Unlike the WID debate¹⁴, significant contributions to the thinking behind the 'empowerment approach' have come from 'third world' women (for example Sen and Grown 1988; Batliwala 1993), although there remains the danger that even 'empowerment' is something which is done 'to' or 'for' people.

Elements of these discourses (of multiple roles) prevail in West Nile in the implementation of development initiatives, programmes and projects. The 1995 publication by ACFODE¹⁵ in Kampala "Visible at Last – NGO contribution to

demographic change.

¹⁴ The work of Boserup (1970), Tinker (1976) and Rogers (1980) established a basis for the 'Women in Development' (WID) critique which examined how to integrate women into development models, arguing that women's access to the market and the public sphere was the solution to their exclusion from economic opportunity.

¹⁵ ACFODE : 'Action for Development', an 'action-oriented, non-profit making, non-governmental women's organisation' set up in 1985 with a goal of "increasing the participation of women and girls in the social, economic and political arena" (ACFODE, 1995:1).

women's recognition in Uganda" depicts African women being unbound from swaddling bindings on its cover. Contributions from 47 national and international NGOs are preceded by a foreword by Dr Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe¹⁶. Discussing the idea of 'empowerment' she argues that "Given the situation of women in this country and the social organisation which is characterised by the deeply entrenched patriarchal values, the only way to strengthen marginalised groups, like women, and the poor, is through NGOs" (ACFODE, 1995:iv), and the contributions which follow draw heavily on practical interpretations of 'empowerment', 'capacity building', 'sustainability', 'networking' and 'advocacy' – reflecting elements of WID and GAD¹⁷ approaches in the general overall context of release from long-standing invisibility.

Other key themes in the contributions in the text are 'rehabilitation' and 'resettlement' – elements of development discourse that apply to the entire nation since 1986, but to certain locations in particular. As I describe further in chapter 3, West Nile had experienced profound political insecurity and violent unrest since 1979, and its people had migrated across the Zairean and Sudanese borders as refugees several times (Allen 1992). Despite having returned, 'resettled' and witnessed the re-establishment of agriculture, commerce and institutions, 'trouble' is generally perceived as 'never very far away'. Most people in Boraja are deeply insecure, viewing their immediate futures with some trepidation. 'Planning' for the future is no longer a function of many households, and it is instead an explicit skill taught in 'development courses', as the government, churches and NGOs work to engender confidence within the area. This sense of imminent crisis has a significant impact upon how people view their imagined spaces and their limitations. On one hand, generational continuums of role models to inspire young women and men have been displaced and fragmented (limiting exploration of spaces), while on the other, the cautionary impact of an 'answerable' or 'accountable' future is removed (fostering risk-taking). Both have consequences upon the behaviour of people living in mission places and on how they occupy, express and negotiate their imagined

¹⁶ Vice-president of Uganda, and Minister for Gender and Community Development (1995)

¹⁷ GAD (Gender and Development) is an approach concerned not simply with women's roles therefore, but with the dynamics and structures of gender relations. In particular, a GAD approach makes visible the power relations that exist between men and women in most societies, the situation of subordination that most women face (Rowlands 1998).

spaces.

These are the characteristics of the 'development' elements of women's imagined spaces in Boraja, although not necessarily in their literal form. At times, a woman may distort or invert the use of a 'development' term to describe her position as 'undeveloped'. Many women in West Nile, precisely because of the highly public and communal development discourse, express awareness of their 'rural', 'backward', 'uneducated' 'powerlessness' and even discuss the fact that they share a 'grant mentality' in relation to their reliance on external aid for 'progress'. Women therefore draw on a development discourse in sophisticated ways to express their own imagined spaces.

2.4.3 Catholic

The mission place is a distillation and a variation of the teaching and practice of a church thousands of years old, which from its origins has delineated separate roles for Christian men and Christian women, and has constructed male and female sexualities as separate and different. Principle figures of the Judeo-Christian tradition, God, Christ, Mary and Eve, represent the contrasting identities and roles for Christians to adopt¹⁸. Ideas, imagined constructions and rootless 'truths' circulate in private and public consciousness about these figures¹⁹, and whether regarded as utterly real or absolutely notional characters in the Christian tradition, societal norms have evolved and been fixed around these characters, constructing definitions of appropriate roles for women and men. Through the Christian constructions of 'sanctity' and 'goodness', the church made available 'role models' for men and women, based on biblical figures and a litany of saints. These, combined with church doctrine and teaching act as discursive resources for people to use in defining their imagined space, and for the women of Boraja, the church portrayal of the 'ideal woman' has always been very fixed and very clear.

¹⁸ These images of God, Eve and Mary are not limited to theological and feminist discussion. They are images which have been inculcated in me from my early years, which have dipped and surfaced at varying depths of my subconscious, and which I carried with me to Africa. There, I found these images and representations in their African Christian setting, and in questioning these, came to question my own.

¹⁹ Another common expression for these contrasting images and imagined spaces created for women is the 'whore' and the 'madonna'.

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, God has almost always been portrayed as the 'father' of humanity. In Genesis²⁰, 'he' creates the heavens and the earth, male and female, everything living. He displays a 'penchant for order' and has a strong sense of the binary (night and day, male and female, heaven and earth) (Fewell & Gunn 1993 :23)²¹. God is male, alone and good. The 'maleness' of God has implicit meaning for the 'otherness' of women, who then stood in contrast to God, male, alone and good, as Rosalind Miles put it, "If God was male and woman was not male, then whatever God was, woman was not" (Miles 1988:68). In Genesis, two creation stories are presented. In the first, male and female are given equal status, "male and female he created them. And God blessed them"²², while in the second, the female is created separately and is partial, "she shall be called woman, because she was taken from man"²³. It is the second version which has endured more vividly in church practice, compounded by the story of the 'Fall of Man', in which Eve tempts Adam to eat forbidden fruit, thereby angering God (the Father) and condemning humanity to a world in which sin exists to destroy all that is good. In this story, Eve was not only created secondary and partial to the male Adam, but she betrayed God the Father and creator while tempting Adam into sin. She is temptress, seductress and polluter.

The dualism is thus established where male is good and female is not; man is innocent, woman is sinful. The messages and repercussions of this event/story/narrative have been monumentally enduring, and is, as Rosalind Miles puts it "possibly the most effective piece of enemy propaganda in the long history of the sex war" (1988:94).

²⁰Genesis is the first 'book' of the Old Testament of the Bible. For the purposes of this thesis, all biblical references and quotations will be drawn for the popular edition of the Jerusalem Bible, 1962, Darton Longman and Todd

²¹ It has been argued that the genesis, monotheistic narrative reflected the patriarchal and political society of Judaism at that time, in which the leaders of the tribes were men, ruling and judging with primacy and superiority in a fixed hierarchical structure (Borennsen 1991, Isherwood & McEwan 1993, Lerner 1986).

²²Gen.1:26-27

²³Gen.2:21-23

The interpretation of the 'Fall of Man' has had two main consequences for women - in terms of power and of sex. Since "Adam was led to sin by Eve, not Eve by Adam, it is just and right then, that women accept as Lord and Master him who she led to sin" (Ambrose in Miles 1988:69)²⁴, it has been interpreted that woman is of poor judgement and should comply with man's wishes for her. She is robbed of any integral power in society. Secondly, Augustine interpreted the 'Fall of Man' in terms of the sexual sin that Eve tempted Adam into, and firmly laid the legacy of Original Sin at Eve's door²⁵. Sex was the downfall itself; Adam having been lured by the physical, lusty, material Eve into an act of sexual intercourse²⁶. Thus, the association of Eve with sex and with things primal, earthly and instinctive and of Adam with the pure, spiritual, and corruptible was established in the first pages of the Bible, the most widely read book in history.

Christ, son of God, was undeniably male. However, his ministry preached equality, love and mercy, while he demonstrated on numerous occasions, his love of women as well as men. The gospel of John particularly documents how he stood up for women, considered them equal, and after his resurrection, appeared first to Mary Magdalene²⁷. The character of Mary Magdalene is one of several key women in the gospels, an 'updating' of the Old Testament 'Eve' figure; sinful, sexual and female. Christ's public forgiveness of her sins, and his direct comparison of them with men's sins is interpreted as evidence of his radical teaching, and also of his redressing the misogyny in traditional Judaic interpretations of the scriptures. The other gospels all include the story of how Jesus healed the 'unclean' women, while in Acts, many women are included among his disciples and first followers²⁸. However, the gospels themselves are 'representations' of the Christ event, and in the telling, women are handled differently than men. White and Tiongco (1997) demonstrate that women are presented only in

²⁴ Ambrose (339-397) was the Bishop of Milan, and was "the first church leader to use his office successfully to coerce civil rulers" (Dowley 1977:149). He was a very influential figure in the early church, and as teacher of Augustine, baptised him in 387 (see Cross 1997:49).

²⁵ Augustine of Hippo (354-430) is a 'Doctor of the Church' whose "influence on the course of subsequent theology has been immense" (Cross 1997:129). His teachings dominated western Christianity until the thirteenth century, when the revision of Aristotle's philosophy came to the fore.

²⁶ Certain interpretations read the story of the garden of Eden as Eve being tempted into having sexual relations with Satan, throwing both Adam and Eve into a different balancing of guilt, while some artistic representations of the creation story depict Satan as female.

²⁷ John 9:1-11, John 12:1-9, John 11:1-4, John 20.

roles relating to somebody else (as mother, wife, prostitute) or they are absent. In Matthew's gospel, eighty-five men are mentioned alongside only twelve women, while in the parables of Mark, there are eighteen men and no women (White and Tiongco 1997:127).

The story of how the representations of women in the bible evolved into fixed societal attitudes is complex and contested. From the early church, the contention about Judaic rites of purification, the orthodox and Gnostic views, the role of Paul, the issue of male celibacy as a pre-requisite to the priesthood, to the doctrinal developments of Aquinas, Ambrose and Augustine ... the processes by which women and men were made separate and unequal were overwhelmingly political and increasingly patriarchal. The construction of a model of 'Good women' in the image of 'Mary the Mother of God' is now interpreted in these terms also, and the establishment of the 'Mary Cult', especially after the reformation reinforced Mary, mother of God, as the antithesis of Eve; her image one of exemplary chastity and humility.

Daly (1968) points out that there are three critical assumptions attached to Mary in this role of model for all women. It is assumed that we know a lot about her, when in fact there is scant evidence in the gospels of her life. Her historical context is assumed to be irrelevant, and her actions and attitudes are taken as timeless and untainted by contemporary custom. Finally, the relationship between Mary and Jesus is used as the basis of a model for male-female relationships in general, rather than contextualising it as a cross-generational, mother-son relationship (Daly 1968:161-162). These assumptions strip Mary of any representational context, and leave her devoid of personality, representing her life entirely in its maternal role. She is seen at the Nativity and at the Crucifixion, in joy and in grief, but the years between these events are glossed over and she is never portrayed as a woman with a sexual identity. The idea of Mary, the mother of God, functioning biologically, emotionally and sexually as a woman was anathema to the Church fathers²⁹.

²⁸Mark 5:25, Matthew 8:18, Luke 8:40.

²⁹This is a particularly Catholic tenet, whereby the mention of 'Jesus' brothers' in the gospels is interpreted as referring to his cousins, rather than considering that Mary and Joseph may have

When faced with the 'dilemma' of Mary's femaleness (there was no escaping that Christ's mother had to be a woman), the church fathers constructed several dogmas to explain away the contradictory femaleness of this undoubtedly holy person. Firstly, she was declared 'ever virgin' - so not only did she conceive and give birth to Christ without loss of her virginity, but she remained pure, untouched and therefore 'loyal' for the rest of her mortal life³⁰. Secondly, she was declared "immaculately conceived" herself - so that she was not the result of sexual union between her parents, but rather, the product of divine intervention. In this way, Mary was utterly untainted by any connection with sex. Thirdly, in 1950, Pope Pius XI decreed (infallibly) that Mary did not die a mortal death, but that she ascended to heaven, body and soul intact (the bodily Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary). Therefore just as Mary did not corrupt herself with the base functions of normal life as a woman, neither did she rot and decay, mere flesh, like a normal woman would. 'Our Lady' was thus constructed, as a woman untouched, and detached from the material world³¹. These dogmas each detach Mary from the normal, living, corporeal experience of women. The church removed her femaleness, to keep her holy (Bingemar and Gebara, 1989, Loades 1994).

Mary's acceptance of God's will and willingness to bear the child, Jesus, has been long taken as the 'perfect' example of womanly submissiveness³². Then, as mother, she sanctifies procreation, but as a virgin mother, she makes a clear and

continued after the birth of Jesus to have other children in the normal way. Protestants do not adhere to the notion of an ever-virgin Mother of God, and would consider the 'Holy Family' to comprise of Jesus and his parents and siblings. See for example, Luke 8 :19-21.

³⁰ McKay (1991) describes it as "perverse" to choose the virgin rather than the married woman as a symbol of fidelity. Here, loyalty and fidelity to God is paralleled with a woman's sexual monogamy to one man, and this surely reveals again the church's deep fear and paternalistic denial of sexual expression, if virginity (and ignorance) is the only guarantor of loyalty.

³¹ This decree seems to come rather 'late' in Christian church history, and it is argued by certain catholic scholars that although the concept had circulated for decades, the timing was particularly set to bolster the Catholic faithful in a post-war era of uncertainty and austerity, and to counter the ideological thrust of communism.

³² Some feminist interpretations of the divine impregnation of a teenage girl argue that this glorification of submission seeks to mask the metaphorical rape of Mary by a male God (and by extension then of women by a male church). See for example, the later works of Mary Daly (1973, 1979), and a recent paper by Marcella Althaus-Reid (1997), which challenge the intrinsic

negative statement about sexual expression, while offering, at best, a confused message about the institution for procreation, marriage. By de-sexing Mary, and declaring her 'ever-virgin', the church fathers were again promoting virginity and celibacy above marriage, and linking celibacy to sanctity³³.

These have been the principal themes and images, the discursive resources which have contributed to the construction of women in the Christian tradition and particularly in the Catholic church. These were carried to the African missions where women learned that 'Christian women' modelled themselves on 'Our Lady', 'Mary, mother of God' and 'Mother of the church'. Robert argues that the Catholic mission force's use of 'Mary' contributed an essential symbol of the feminine in the church which was absent in the Protestant effort (1996:367). Catholic missionary sisters tended to model themselves on active 'Martha' (who attended to Christ's material needs³⁴), and only occasionally on the contemplative Mary (Martha's sister who chose to listen to Christ).

Even the 'modern church', drawing from the monumentally significant documents of the Second Vatican Council, which specifically addressed sex discrimination falls prey to the deeply rooted androcentric discourse that is embedded in church culture and language. Clearly Vatican II did mark a watershed for the church in almost every aspect, embracing and accommodating modernity, while refocusing on Christ. For women, it has only served as a starting point, encouraging in spirit, but revealing the depths of androcentrism and misogyny in practice. The acceptable spaces still on offer to Christian women today are as virgins, mothers or nuns, all secondary to the male spaces available. Commentators such as Barrowdale (1991) have claimed that the church views marriage itself as an absolving screen, behind which injustices against women such as rape and violence are tacitly ignored. Feminist theology is challenging the exclusive nature of the church's accommodation of women, and as women question

patriarchy of the church and of Christianity, relating it to contests of sexuality and power.

³³ For women to be holy, they had to deny their sexuality, negate their bodies and bear no children. In this way, women withdrew from society into cloistered communities, occupying a holy space between marriage and the priesthood.

³⁴ Luke 10:38-42

the nature of their roles as Christians, they simultaneously question overt assumptions about gender, sex and sexuality (Braidotti 1994, Murphy 1996, Dreyer 1995, Hoose 1993, Bem 1993). Thus, although encouraged by the spirit of Vatican II, women who were alerted to the inconsistencies in its intent and practice, moved together to reclaim the church, the bible and the message of the gospels for themselves.

This move is in concert with efforts by African feminist theologians seeking "the female face of God, through their analysis of their experiences in culture and in religion" (Kanyoro 1995:20). Theologians such as Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Elizabeth Amoah, Teresa Hinga, Therese Souga and Musimbi Kanyoro have emerged in recent years as significant theological voices from the 'margins'. Drawing from feminist, inculturated and liberationist theologies, they contest the images and roles of the 'good' Christian woman (Oduyoye and Kanyoro 1995, Fabella and Oduyoye 1988, King 1994, Hinga 1988). The growth of this theological exploration is most evident in the Protestant tradition, where women have enjoyed increased access to theological and pastoral responsibilities in the past twenty years in particular. In the Catholic church, the voices of and for women remain on the margins, and especially so in Africa. Attempts to question assumptions related to gender, sexuality and the church (representations of women in the bible and the issue of a male celibate priesthood for example) meet with an increasing degree of censure from Rome³⁵. Conservative voices such as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and Cardinal Juan Dundoval regularly condemn dissent on these issues ; "the doctrinal deviations of the church are manifested in Indigenous Theology, the ecological movement and feminism" (Cardinal Dundoval, 1996)³⁶.

³⁵ A recent and controversial book by Tissa Balasuriya (1997) questions the construction of Mary in the Church, and presents Mary as "a partner in Jesus' radical, critical, liberative mission" (Rayan 1997:1394). Balasuriya was excommunicated by Rome for the 'heresy' he preached, and reinstated only after he issued a retraction, which he couched in terms of 'misunderstanding'. In July 1998, Pope John Paul II issued an apostolic letter 'Ad Tuendam Fidem' (accompanied by an 'explanatory commentary by Cardinal Ratzinger) in which he effectively extended the exercise of 'just penalty' in circumstances of doctrinal dissent from infallible to 'defined' matters. This has been widely interpreted as closing options for dissenting discussion on key ecumenical matters, and as a means of silencing 'radical' voices in Catholic institutions. As *The Tablet* described it "The new measures may merely close a loophole in canon law, but they introduce a chill into the atmosphere" (1988:895)

³⁶ Cardinal Juan Dundoval, Archbishop of Guadalajara (*The Tablet* 1996:768).

Therefore in the mainstream Catholic church, the voices contesting traditional spaces for women are still considered 'dissenting' and 'deviant', and indeed are seldom heard. The Catholic women of the mission places in Africa tend not to explicitly question the 'Catholic' characteristics of their imagined spaces. However, when in union with their 'lugbara' and 'development' cultural dimensions, the 'Catholic' element is often contested. It is these moments, these ruptures, these contests of identity that ignite women's imagined spaces at the boundaries of their accountability.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has established the theoretical grounds for my use of imagined spaces to analyse the ways in which a woman in mission places in Africa structures her life. I have moved beyond considerations of 'roles' and 'identities' because these constitute only part of the social space that a woman occupies in a fluid and contested way. The balance between structure and agency is measured in her negotiation of the boundaries of her imagined space which are defined in terms of the various cultural codes of accountability which characterise her space. This is not, and cannot be a postcolonial piece of work, although it is informed by postcolonial discourse. The gaps it addresses are particular and situated among several disciplines, yet it is a sense of the mission place and the importance of its religious setting which I want to retain.

Moore (1996) quotes Okot P'Bitek's 'Song of Ocol' to help situate her study within an awareness of African women's multiplicitous spaces :

“Woman of Africa
Sweeper
Smearing floors and walls
with cow dung and black soil
Cook, ayah, the baby on your back
Washer of dishes,
Planting, weeding, harvesting
Store-keeper, builder
Runner of errands,

Cart, lorry, donkey ...

Woman of Africa

What are you not?"

This, in a sense sets up what my thesis responds to, since the imagined spaces I describe for the women of Boraja illustrate precisely what else African women now are. Their new spaces incorporate most if not all of the above 'lugbara' roles and identifiers, but also draw upon the discursive resources of the 'development' and 'Catholic' cultural domains. These contributions to their imagined spaces extend their spatial expressions into the gendered and sexualised spaces of the mission place.

Chapter Three : Methodological considerations in field research.

3.1 Ethnographic field methods

3.1.1 Introduction

In this chapter I address the 'how' of my research, and I explain how my own imagined space and its roles, identifiers and externalities affected the methods I employed in my ethnography. I distinguish between aspects of my imagined space as an instrument of my research, and particular elements of it which acted as identifiers that other people related to in particular ways. My field methods are described, and the chapter closes with a discussion of the ethical considerations contained in my ethnographic methodology.

This first section describes the methods I employed in my field research, and in particular explores the dual roles I occupied while conducting ethnographic research in Uganda. These are situated in the general argument that I put forward regarding the 'full personhood' of the ethnographer. As such, this section considers the 'tools' I employed, including myself as an instrument of research; a missionary woman researching mission women.

3.1.2 Self as instrument of research : Missionary teacher and ethnographer

In Uganda, I was a lay-missionary teacher and I was an ethnographer. Rather than imagine that I slipped from one role into another as the situation demanded, I reflect on my time in Africa as a time which satisfied several dimensions of my personality, and in which I was BOTH ethnographer and teacher. Although I write this thesis as an academic, a geographer, a researcher, there are other constituent parts to my person that guide my decisions, and that influence my research. I was not in Uganda solely as an ethnographer ; I was also there as a teacher, a volunteer, a lay-missionary and somebody long concerned with 'development'; somebody who wanted to give a little . My imagined space was not one that I happened to assume while I was there (see Robson 1997), nor was it merely a convenient 'cover story' for

my ethnography. It was bounded by codes of accountability that I negotiated in relation to the balance I had to strike between my own needs and those of others and my research. Communal discourses informed my space, and my experience of living as a woman missionary teacher and researcher became my own discursive repertoire.

While some might argue that this dilutes the effectiveness and value of my ethnography, I would have to reply that I merely anticipated and acknowledged the complex motivations that found me in Uganda, and that as such, my understanding of my role in my research is more realistic and more complete. Referring to Junker's typology (1960), I was both participant and observer, but I am also somebody in relationships, somebody who interacts and who functions in roles other than ethnographic, and somebody who is myself a positioned subject.

My position is comparable, to a degree, with that adopted by Nancy Scheper-Hughes in her study of life and death in communities in northeastern Brazil which she documents in her inspiring "Death Without Weeping" (1992). In an apologetic introductory note she outlines her 'specific relationship' with the community that informs her study, where she worked as a Peace Corps public health/community development worker, a relationship "generally thought of today in critical and enlightened anthropological circles as something of a stigma, just one step removed, perhaps, from having been a Christian missionary" (1992 : 5). Here, she encapsulates two dimensions of ethnographic fieldwork that I confronted. Not only is the disdain traditionally attached to 'Missionaries' by other groups of foreigners in the field made explicit, but she also dwells upon the 'relationship' existing between the researcher and the researched. While her obvious affiliation to the Peace Corps is attributed 'stigma' status, diluting her authentic ethnographic credentials, her study reveals in depth that it was on the basis of this relationship (not the non-specific relationship between ethnographer and subject), where she provided a needed service to the community, that her interactions with local people took place. It was these purposeful interactions, while she was wearing her 'Peace Corps' hat, that made her ethnography possible and profound.

Also, and on a very practical level, this 'other' role, for Scheper-Hughes in public health, and for me in education, provides something real 'to be getting on with' while watching and witnessing as Ethnographers. It also redresses in a small way the imbalance of 'taking' so much from the place, by 'giving' a little back to the local community, a consideration seldom discussed by ethnographers, but a strong motivating factor in my imagined space.

3.1.2.a Missionary

I feel it is important to develop the particular label of 'Missionary' as it figured in my imagined space, since it carries much more explicit 'baggage' into the field than 'teacher' or 'ethnographer', and establishes particular affiliations that a 'neutral' ethnographer would probably disclaim (Batterbury 1997). My affiliations with a Catholic Diocese, a mission place and with the Missionary Volunteer agency all undoubtedly influenced any degree of 'subjectivity' I might claim, but considering that I had chosen to study the mission place as a conduit of cultural and developmental change for women, it was entirely appropriate for me to adopt the locally acceptable and useful role of lay-missionary teacher. To explore the 'imagined spaces' of women connected to mission places in a thorough way, it was necessary for me to occupy one myself. This positioning deliberately contrasts with an anthropological distance with 'mission', which I discussed earlier.

Both missionaries and anthropologists are currently questioning their behaviour and presence in other cultures. In mission, this has been as the result of theologies emerging from marginalised people and places, and a move towards 'inculturation'. Liberation theology in particular has represented a ground shift away from an ethnocentric church practices and beliefs. Pels (1987) in van der Geest 1990) has observed what he refers to as the simultaneous rise of liberation theology and reflexive/critical anthropology :

“ ... while reflexive anthropologists brought home the necessity to study themselves first .. liberation theologians urged missionaries to convert themselves first (to another culture) ... Reflexive anthropologists try to show how culturally

determined their own scientific conceptions are ... while modern missiologists argue that their own culture is polygamist .. pagan .. or syncretic " (Pels 1987 : 6-7 in van der Geest 1990).

So, as mission and ethnology both adjust their perspectives of themselves, other cultures, and of each other, and given my argument about multiple motivations bringing the ethnographer to the field, my presence and positioning in the field seem appropriate.

3.1.2.b Teacher

Being a VM teacher in Boraja was a solid identifier for me to rely upon when justifying my presence there. Teaching set my schedule for each day, week, term and year. It fixed me in the school compound, and provided me with colleagues who later became friends. Being among the Diocesan teaching staff established common ground with the other teachers of the district, as we struggled to make arrangements for sports meetings, to register for examinations and to organise classes around a 'probable' election date. Being employed by the Diocese connected me to Ugandan staff, ordained and lay, who also worked for the Diocese. In the day to day activities of my work, I encountered innumerable situations and narratives that propelled my exploration of womens' lives in Boraja further. In my real and purposive connection with pupils and staff at the school, I entered reciprocal relationships in which we exchanged our own 'knowledges'.

When I was made Deputy Headmistress of BDSI in November 1993, I entered the school administration, and was no longer just a teacher¹. I accepted this appointment reluctantly. I felt that I was inappropriate for the position, and it was only when the implications of my *not* taking on the position were spelled out to me, that I realised how self-focused my perspective still was. However, the 'volunteer' dimension of my presence in Boraja was on the basis of responding to locally expressed needs, so I

¹ The course of events that led to this change in administration involved key members of the Diocesan staff, and I was a convenient 'stop gap' appointment to delay political and quite acrimonious differences among staff in Arua and Boraja.

accepted the post.

With regard to my methodology, my position as Deputy in the second year of my research influenced how certain people viewed me, and also changed the 'domain' of work that I experienced. In practical terms the change meant that I had my own office, was responsible for discipline, accounts and timetabling. I found myself 'in charge'² of the entire school while the Headmistress was away, although in fact I never felt really in charge. On these occasions, I relied so heavily upon the advice and information of the Headgirl, other teachers and local people that I made very few autonomous decisions myself. Stepping up into the administration of the school removed me from daily and casual contact with the other staff, but brought me into more immediate direct contact with the entire school body. The change in responsibility and status meant that I sat on many committees, travelled to Arua and even Kampala on school business, dealt with cassava sellers, nuisance boyfriends and drunken teachers on a daily basis, and was generally much more involved in school matters than I had been previously. The adjustment in my imagined space meant that I had access to unanticipated ethnographic material, but it also meant that there were fewer hours in the day to make note of it.

The label of 'Deputy' changed how I was perceived locally, and the communal discourse which shaped my imagined space altered. I spent much more time at the school, and rarely made the short trip home between lessons. People would come to the school to find me, rather than to the house. I was supervising the building of the new school latrines, and would find myself inspecting handmade bricks, discussing their quality and price - before breakfast. I was there to send off and welcome back the students participating in sports events ; I was driving around the district in a panic seeking a missing student ; I was racing to the hospital to admit a student who accidentally overdosed on aspirin ; I was forever making speeches at feasts ; I was scolding a boy from Ombaci for distracting my student with love letters ; I was concocting accounts to convince donors that their money had been well spent. I engaged in several activities that I was not entirely happy about, but which were

² 'In charge' was used flexibly in Boraja to denote the person who is in charge of something, as well as

necessary 'Deputy' duties³. Therefore, in unanticipated ways, my imagined space situated me where my 'foreign' status was accentuated, where I struggled with what I considered 'appropriate', and where rich ethnographic material, sown in the recognition of difference, emerged.

3.1.2.c Ethnographer

When I explained to local people that I was interested in 'development' in West Nile, and wanted to 'talk' with local people about 'development', it was assumed that I would only be interested in the people 'officially' involved in such things, and I was advised to talk to the County Chief and leaders of local women's groups and fish pond projects. In the parish and the Diocese, when I went to talk to key personnel and clergy, I was seen as the volunteer teacher, who was also interested in the development of the parish.

While such meetings were useful, it meant that my 'ethnography' was conducted primarily when people assumed I was in my teaching role, since they distanced themselves from my 'development' enquiries, foregrounding other 'experts'. When I explained that I would be returning to finish a research degree in Scotland, it was widely accepted that this is what most teachers did, since the majority of teachers in West Nile were 'waiting' to complete their degrees in Kampala. In Kampala, using the facilities in Makerere, I identified myself primarily as a student of the University of Edinburgh, and secondly as a teacher in West Nile, and nobody ever questioned the compatibility of the two roles.

My research interests were disclosed to the subjects of my research, either in passing during day-to-day encounters, or more specifically when interviews were being arranged and conducted. The Bishop of the Diocese, and my sending agency VMM, were also aware of my dual roles. However, since my research was a process of learning for myself, I could only describe my general area of interest to informants. It was only much later, when I had left the field, that my analysis of the mission place gelled around certain issues and themes, based largely on the everyday of mission life.

the act itself.

³ Disciplining students was to remain a difficult area for me. My idea of 'extra homework' was ridiculed by other teachers, who considered two days' digging in the school field as light punishment for 'speaking

Therefore, some of the narratives and stories that emerged as pivotal to my analysis were recorded without the explicit co-operation of the main participants in them. In other cases, by the time the significance of certain people became apparent, they had become sensitised to any outside scrutiny, and they were unwilling to engage with me in any research capacity. As such, the data central to my analysis was sometimes gathered 'covertly', but not duplicitously. The 'everyday' was in the public domain, in the realm of communal discourse. Few were aware that I was recording 'the everyday' in such detail, and nobody (including myself at the time) could anticipate the significance I would later attribute to it. Figure 3.1 illustrates where I spent my time while in East Africa during these 21 months, and it is clear that the majority of my time was spent in Boraja and Arua, while my time in Hoima and Kampala was most often on school-related business.

3.1.2.d Woman

As a woman engaged in ethnographic research principally focused on other women, my 'womanhood' was also an essential element of my imagined space as I conducted my research. The issue of women engaging in ethnographic research, and their being women affecting that research has been debated thoroughly across the social sciences in recent years (Golde (ed) 1970, Mc Dowell 1988, 1992, Mohanty 1982, Nast et al 1994, Radcliffe 1994, Stanley 1990). Applying the debate to my own experience in Boraja, I would say that being a woman was a common experience I could share with local women, but only within the limits of our differences. This was perhaps the first time in my life when my ties with women stemmed from the fact that our gender was all we shared in common; it was certainly the case that I was included in a discourse among the mission women of Boraja because, on these grounds, I was 'one of them'. This is not to say that our experience of being women was identical, nor that our concerns as women were even similar, but the grounds for our shared experience and concerns was common in womanhood. However, I feel that being 'foreign' was a more powerful excluder, and that being 'woman' was an includer.

vernacular'.

Practically, this meant that I was invited to join in womens' activities in the community - sewing vestments, preparing food, planning feasts, budgeting for market and walking to the borehole and marketplaces. Admittedly, I did not participate in the gruelling tasks that occupied so much of womens's time there; I did not fetch my own water, chop my own wood, grind my own cassava or even wash my own clothes (see Madge 1997 on this, as an issue of 'Boundary Dispute' (Bhabha 1983)). When such tasks were discussed between us women, my 'foreign' status overrode my 'woman' status, and I would be 'excused'. Still, we would share jokes about 'the woman's lot', compare histories and our traditional customs and discuss the merits and problems in educating girls and young women. Since polygamy and drunkenness were considered 'mens' habits' (which had enormous effects on womens' lives), they were often discussed, as friends and neighbours suffered as a result of either. But, although I was a woman and wife too, these were not problems I could share.

I spent much of my time in Boraja with women who worked in our compound, with female colleagues and the girls at school, with the wives of local 'big men', with the Sisters of the convent, with Lay Assistants and other women of the mission community. The men I spent time with were Doctors, clergy, teachers, and managers of the Carpentry school or the Pastoral Training Centre - and of course, Michael - generally 'big men' in the community. This time tended to be focused conversations, whereas the time I spent with the women of Boraja was less intense, more casual and with more laughter. Often, we would sit sewing, shelling peas or playing with a baby, and the conversation would be interrupted by these activities and passing neighbours. I might go to Sarah or Rosa's house to ask about something specific (an examination paper, or transport into Arua) and would end up spending a few hours 'sitting' there, perhaps with another few women, talking about our families, our friends, marriage, children, the church, clothes, men, our work, our mothers and all the rambling topics that make up conversations between friends.

3.1.2.d.i Wife

It was generally considered a good thing that I was accompanied in Boraja by Michael. His presence was taken as testimony of my 'normality', and it was assumed that we were still in the flush of young love. This meant that I was not single, I was not an ex-nun or potential nun, nor was I in Boraja in search of a man. I was safely spoken for, and moreover, Michael was considered young enough to 'keep' me. Assumptions of 'normality' were based on heterosexual relationships whose most desired outcome is the bearing of children. Especially in our first few weeks, we spent most of our time together, steeling ourselves to go for a walk to the trading centre or through the hospital, gathering a following of excited children, spectators and 'madmen' in our wake. Later, when our work absorbed more of our time, we would spend less of our routine time together, but most of our social time together (besides, the school and hospital were only three minutes walk apart)⁴.

As Michael's wife, my first priority was supposed to be his welfare. Therefore, when Michael was sick, it was expected that I should stay home from school to look after him, and I was admonished for attending classes while he was at home. Luckily, he wasn't ill often. At the Leaving Feast held by the school and the hospital before we left, several speeches were made in tribute to our work in Boraja. The first speech made about me opened with :

"And let us take this opportunity to thank Mister Michael from the bottom of our hearts" (applause) "for it is thanks to him that Miss Nuala was able to come to work in our school. He was the one who released her from her duties at the homeplace to come and teach us here at BDSI" (applause)(Tape 21, Sept 8th 1994)

⁴ The importance of our close proximity to each other, which was much more pronounced in Boraja than at home in Edinburgh, was that we knew where each other was. One of the previous VMM couples' marriage had run into difficulty and broken down while they were in Boraja, mainly because the husband started a very public relationship with the housegirl who worked for them. Other VMM women had formed 'friendships' with parish priests. People often commented that Michael and I were "ever seen together", something that pleased the parish priest and local men and women who had weathered the storms of previous volatile VMM relationships.

3.1.2.d.ii Mother

It was not our intention to start a family in Africa, but it so happened that we did. In November 1993, Amaniyo Rosa, the headmistress of BDSI and my friend, delivered a long-awaited baby boy. Visiting her in the hospital the following morning, I held the beautiful baby close, and the other lugbara women present all chattered and giggled. Then Michael arrived and wanted to hold the baby too. "Ah, now it is certain," Rosa laughed, "they are saying that it will be you in this bed next year, especially now that Michael has come to see a beautiful baby". Michael and I laughed off their speculation, and in fact I only remembered the incident a year later, when I was in an Edinburgh hospital's post-natal ward, writing to tell Rosa of our new baby boy.

We decided to leave Uganda in September 1994, a few months short of our full contract term, and to return home to Edinburgh for the delivery. We began to tell our friends and colleagues in Boraja of our plans in May, being very apologetic about leaving our placements early. The response was one of overwhelming delight for us.

"At last!" Dr. Laki boomed, "the tragedy is over. This is WONDERFUL news, FANTASTIC news". (Fieldnotes 28/4/94)

Brother Tarcisio in Kampala brushed aside our admission that the timing was somewhat inconvenient, "But why else would you be married if not to have beautiful babies. This is what you are here to do !" (Fieldnotes 18/5/94)

Many people responded with "At last!", since it seemed that four years of 'unproductive' marriage was stretching the boundaries of young love to its limits, and there was no doubting that it was my delay in the miracle of creation that had been the problem⁵.

Attitudes towards both of us changed. My pregnancy seemed to make us more 'human', perhaps more susceptible to the hazards that our lugbara friends lived with all the time. I began to hear childbearing stories from all the women I knew who were mothers, ranging from "I delivered on the way to market, and when I got there, the millet was all gone and my husband said to me 'did you get nothing there except another mouth?'" to "the pain it is not so bad" to the memorable piece of advice from a

⁵ The pregnancy was seen more as my success in conceiving rather than Michael's success in impregnating, since the latter would never be in doubt until he had three 'barren' wives behind him, rather like using up three wishes.

nurse, "Do not take those painkillers like European women. The pain it is not so bad, so don't take morphine, just take courage!". She was a nun.

All of a sudden, I was a 'proper woman' (no longer a girl), about to partake in the rite of childbearing that would unite me with the other mothers of the world. As a pregnant 'mundu', I became part of the communal discourse in a more explicit way. I went to the hospital every fortnight, to have my bloodpressure and weight checked. If I was not seen at the evening volleyball game at the hospital compound the three doctors would visit me at home. Hospital staff were all conversant with my bloodpressure and weight details, and sometimes Michael would hear the results of a check-up from his carpenters before I had the chance to see him myself.

We were surprised at just how happy people were for us, and that our reason for leaving easily outweighed the inconvenience of our leaving our projects early. I realised then that we were viewed as people with lives to lead of our own, rather than teachers or engineers. If we were to be remembered in Boraja at all, it would be as people, not as projects. As we left, friends offered traditional lugbara names for the baby, and at the leaving celebrations, there was joy at our reason for leaving.

In terms of my methodology, my pregnancy reduced my trips to both Arua and Kampala (although broken bridges, mudslides and ambushes by rebels on the road south did play their part too). By the end of my second year in Boraja, I was happier to introduce myself (by then a familiar face) to administrators, but I could seldom travel into town to do so. In this way, my collection of statistics and information was hampered, as was the number of interviews reduced. The situations described above were particular to my circumstances, but my fieldwork was also constrained by the 'usual' factors of climate, transport (see Barley 1983, 1986), language (Evans *et al*, 1997 :13) and bureaucracy (Howard 1997 : 33-35) that operate on most outsiders conducting research in another country (Rabinow 1977).

It is clear then how the elements of my imagined space which I have highlighted influenced various aspects of my methodology and research. There were other elements (such as being Irish, Catholic and a particular type of volunteer) that marked me out from the people I lived with, but these did not influence my ethnography so directly. I will now consider how these positions were not fixed, and how my position, once established, was liable to change.

3.1.3 Repositioning

As an ethnographer and a missionary teacher, I was immersed, active and involved in the activities that concerned me. But, as a European in Africa, I was still the outsider. I did not consciously 'hold back' from my experiences connected to teaching for the sake of a 'pure' ethnography, since I believed that 'my' ethnography had so much of 'me' implicated in it that the truer my experience of fully participating in this given role, the richer the resultant ethnography would be.

3.1.3.a Oscillating

As Madge (1997) reminds us, the research endeavour involves "a living relationship between the person doing the research and the people who are the subject of that research. This relationship is not fixed but changes through time". The following fieldnote extracts demonstrate the fluid repositioning that occurred in one situation. I have added the position and emotion that attended the course of events over these few days to illustrate the repositioning I describe.

"August 19th 1994

Today, Peyerina came to the compound to see if we had heard that Connie Fulbright was coming from SCOTAID for another project evaluation of the Womens Group. She was in a bit of a panic, wanting to know when exactly Connie was coming etc, and needing a lift into town with us tomorrow (Approached as Missionary Teacher and Friend).

August 20th 1994

Michael and Gianni had good craic today at the Procure. Among other things Gianni was ranting about Peyerina coming and asking him to issue receipts for things that she hadn't bought from him. It seems that she's in a blind panic because Connie is coming to check the books, and she can't

account for where half the money has gone (Conversing as fellow Missionaries managing Foreign Finance, bemused)

The fact that her son is the only person ever seen on the motorbike that SCOTAID paid for, to allow the women to co-ordinate their activities is probably the least of her concerns. People are saying that she doesn't look like such a 'big woman' now (Discussed as local Teacher, unsympathetic).

August 23rd 1994

Connie arrives tomorrow. Mary Laki and some of the women have been meeting, and are so depressed about the state of the books and the fact that they are going to be accused of pilfering funds, that they're apparently going to let Peyerina try and explain herself to Connie, because they can make no headway with the crazy accounts she has/hasn't kept (Discussed as Friends, sympathetic to Mary Laki).

August 24th 1994

Connie arrived and was whisked off by Peyerina on the usual tour of women's clubs, feasts and dancing, and when she returned (exhausted) she insisted that they meet first thing in the morning to discuss the books. Peyerina arrived, and they spent HOURS at the books, very serious stuff. At lunch with us, Connie sighed in exasperation and said that the accounts weren't up to date, and that apparently Gianni had not issued proper accounts for the group (Approached as fellow European, donor to charity, connected to same aid agencies). I said nothing (loyal to Peyerina and Mary, as friend of local women). Later, Connie told Peyerina that she would pop in with Gianni herself and have a wee word, and Peyerina returned within half an hour with what accounts there were. Rosa says she was in a real state, terrified that Connie would talk to Gianni (discussed as friends and colleagues). The accounts she brought contained several of those pink and green 'receipts' you can buy in Gaba market, 'proof' of any purchase you like (witnessed as European colleague of Connie's). I wonder is Connie fooled?

August 26th 1994

Connie has gone, and Peyerina looks much relieved. At dinner, before she left, Connie was lamenting the fact that the exchange rates of the project monies often confused local project leaders, and that she might try and arrange a basic accounting course for the Women's group (in conversation as fellow European development workers). I didn't tell her that Peyerina knew the daily exchange rates of the US dollar, sterling, Italian lira and Swiss franc, not to mention Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian shilling rates, and that she and Gianni were well matched in the 'international trading' of developing monies (in local admiration of Peyerina's guile, and as local missionary, pragmatic and seasoned resignation to such guile). Sure what would have been the point ?"

This extract indicates how I shifted from being sympathetic with Connie, to Gianni, to local women Rosa and Mary Laki, to Peyerina herself, and back to Connie. The full and complex motivations within me informed this repositioning, as did the various types of relationships that I engaged in. Also, my repositioning took place among the various dimensions of my imagined space, and I 'shifted' in terms of race, class and gender from one position to another. This example also illustrates the complexity of the dilemmas faced by the participants in such situations. As such, by repositioning myself and acknowledging this process, I feel I gained in insight and that my 'ethnography' benefited. The role of being a 'friend' (as explored by Hendry 1992, Rabinow 1977) is problematic for in ethnography principally because of the power relations involved. For my field research, I allowed friendships to evolve in the context of my other roles in the community, and regard these as genuine, if transitory, friendships.

By being a missionary teacher and ethnographer, I was studying the institution in which I taught (like Hargreaves 1967 and Lacey 1976), although I was also studying the role of the volunteer in mission development work, and examining the role of the institution within the broader Diocesan framework. Therefore, and as my time in the field went on, I was rather more involved than the 'marginal native' position that Freilich describes (1970). Powdermaker's description of this positioning as between 'stranger' and 'friend' implies a static 'in-between' place, whereas I would argue that the positioning is fluid (see Hammersley and Atkinson 1983, Johnson 1976 and Wintrob 1969 for discussion on positioning).

3.1.3.b Retreating

Another type of repositioning which took place more rarely was when, occasionally I felt utterly alien in West Nile, and when my repositioning was emotional and sobering. The most vivid example of this is detailed below and is drawn from extended fieldnotes and diary entries from the days after the shooting of some friends in May 1993. I had only recently met and spent time with a Canadian researcher in West Nile, Alan Walker, who visited Boraja with his lugbara research assistant, Ethan Candiru. They were murdered two days after our last meeting.

" I heard the news as I was standing beside our vehicle in the middle of Arua market. Mystery surrounded the murders, and speculation was rife. Boraja friends with us guessed that his research had annoyed powerful tobacco growers, others reckoned that he had antagonised a nearby army commander, while most supposed that the murderers merely wanted his motorbike and computer, neither of which had been stolen. As I listened to the conversation, I felt increasingly isolated from the people around me. It was raining in Arua, that torrential, relentless and punishing rain that poured in the afternoons. Michael disappeared into the warren of the market looking for engine oil, and I remained beside the vehicle, under a leaking canopy on a shop veranda. I watched the Arua 'town boys' idly eyeing up the vehicle, and they seemed threatening. I watched the maimed beggars shuffle in the mud, approaching me for money, big men brushed past roughly and the rain beat down. All I wanted to do was jump into the vehicle, lock the doors, curl up in the seat and be alone. I felt that somehow 'they' all knew who had killed Alan, and that I never would. All these dark, glaring and nameless people were implicated somehow. I was thoroughly chilled.

" I hated Arua yesterday. While the morning had been empathetically gloomy and wet, as we drove home the sun dared shine again. Arua didn't care less about it son Ethan, or its friend Alan" (Fieldnotes 23/5/93).

Later, I heard that army checkpoints blocked all the town exits, and that for three days, all men leaving or entering town were stopped and questioned. A friend of Michael's was held for several hours' questioning, many men, including some lugbara friends were beaten and a curfew was imposed. When I heard this, my feelings swung back to empathise with these nameless and known innocent men, suffering this circus performance of security while the President flew to the town to head up the investigation. By now, the persistent rumour attributed the deaths to a certain senior army commander in the area, who Alan had annoyed, but who was a former colleague of the President. In witnessing the futility of the 'investigation', and beginning to appreciate some of the ethnic and political complexities of West Nile, I could see that Alan's death had not happened because he was white, but that my lugbara friends were now being victimised because he had been white. If only his assistant, Ethan, had been killed, I might not even have heard of it. Which is even sadder."

This event (and these emotions) resulted in my decision not to formalise my research position while in West Nile. I had obtained a work permit from the Ugandan government to 'work' in Uganda as a volunteer teacher. Bearing in mind the argument of Porteous (1986) and Knight (1987), I fully intended to formalise my research position once I had settled into Boraja⁶, and planned to establish research connections

⁶ The training course for VMM had placed strong emphasis on allowing yourself to gradually become part of the local scene, of not jumping to conclusions or decisions too quickly, to absorb before reacting and to try and be sensitive to the local cultural nuances of 'strange' situations before creating a scene about

in Kampala, and introduce myself to the local government administration in Arua. After Alan and Ethan's murders, when rumours that their deaths were connected to their work were rife, I decided to focus on the local ethnography of Boraja, and to refrain from publicising my research position, or making it 'official'. This decision limited my subsequent access to official information.

3.1.4 Communicating in the field : Language

The language barrier between myself and these informants was considerable. Although after some months I had a basic command of lugbara, enough to conduct social conversation on the road and at market, I was far from fluent. I found this tonal language difficult, and the fact that all the school's business was carried out in English meant that my everyday milieu was in English. We found a local priest willing to teach us, but he was frequently ill and lessons only lasted a few months. Also, most people engaged in the mission parish spoke very good English, and the majority of parish, hospital, school and Diocesan business was carried out and documented in English, which was, after all the 'official' language of Uganda. Generally, I was able to use lugbara in a social sense, and this was enough to assure people that I was genuinely interested in their place and people. There were nuances in both English and lugbara that I would never come fully to grasp with, but local friends persevered with my ignorance. This level of competence in the local language is one that van der Geest comments upon, when comparing anthropologists to missionaries whose commitment to the area is evident in their command of local languages (1990). He draws attention to the fact that despite the frequent use of vernacular terms in ethnographic studies and the emphasis given to good relations with local people in the field, ethnographers seldom explicitly state the limits of their knowledge of local dialects, and "we do not know how many really spoke the language" (1990:595), so here I admit my level of incompetence.

anything.

3.1.5 Recording in the field

3.1.5.a Fieldnotes

Although I had been trained and advised, like Hortense Powdermaker to "note down everything we saw and heard, since in the beginning it is not possible to know what may or may not be significant" (1966:61), I did not make the recording of my observations take up a substantial part of my time in Boraja and I doubt if anyone there remembers me as a 'notetaker' (contrast with other anthropological strategies, discussed in van Maanen (ed) 1995). If my responsibilities as teacher, Deputy, friend, or wife exercised demands on my 'writing-up' time, I generally attended to these responsibilities first, and found myself writing fieldnotes while invigorating examinations at school, or at risk of sounding rather Malinowskian, would often be scribbling in the dark, by candlelight. I prioritised 'being' over 'recording', in a way sympathetic to Dan Rose's view of ethnography (1990)⁷. Rose suggests that we abandon the very tenets of ethnography that place the boundaries between the researcher and the researched, and highlights the incongruity of scribbling fieldnotes after 'participating' fully in drinking and fighting sessions among the street society he lived in. His view echoes my earlier point about the person who happens to be an ethnographer, rather than the ethnographer who happens to have a life. Appendix 1 is drawn from my diaries, notebooks and memories, and lists the names of the people who informed my ethnographic research in Uganda and East Africa. These are the people who provided me with the knowledge embodied in this thesis ; my knowledge is largely based on theirs.

At the end of each day that I spent in Uganda, I filled in a diary. To be honest, sometimes I forgot, and would have to fill in two or three days' worth of events at one time. This was, however, my most consistent means of recording what was happening

⁷ In his monograph 'Living the Ethnographic Life', Rose argues that mainstream ethnography has not met the challenges of a self-conscious counter-discourse epitomised in the zones of 'reversal' that represent the flow of ideas across different cultural boundaries. Ethnographers have traditionally read ethnographic texts, travelled into the field and experienced 'difference' and then returned to academe to create more ethnographic texts. In this way, the 'difference' is lost. He is critical of the way in which ethnographers conduct their field research, the necessity to observe and record, to take notes and to commit to text. The 'experience' is surely fairly shallow and contrived if the ethnographer takes so much time out of the milieu to actually make copious notes, as Malinowski recommended ?

to me and around me in Boraja. Although this averaged only 200 to 300 words a day, this diary charted the unpeeling of the layers of awareness of key relationships and circumstances in Boraja, as I experienced 'enlightenment' gradually. The following extract is an unedited illustration of my diary entry for 6th August 1993, as near 'typical' a day as I could select. It gives an idea of how my days were filled with the mundane and remarkable and the degree of interaction between myself and local people.

"Saturday August 6th 1994

Was still tired this morning, and had one of those frustrating mornings spent with the intention of doing something, but not getting it done. Had meant to get S.4 essays corrected to leave over with them - some of them were fine - others were pure torture, and I got myself into bad form about them by lunch, which turned out to be liver - even worse - so I ate a bit of guacamole with spuds and took myself off for a nap. Again, slept too deeply. Went over to school, saw Aliru Knight, then Inzikuru Lilli, who'd had another run-in with her 'co-' (Peyerina's daughter), at the borehole and she was upset. Came home, as the Lay Assistants meeting was still going on - poor Mary Laki got caught up in it today too. Then, when Michael went for volleyball, I showered, and was starting a report on the newsletter for the girls when Sarah arrived. We sat and chatted until Michael arrived back, and then until it was dark. Walked her up to the hospital, and then we went over to Rosa's, where we ended up spending the entire evening, just sitting blethering. We ate supper there, enya, okra sauce and some very salty fish. Came home after 10, tired again. A good day."

Then, every few weeks, or once a month, I would spend a few hours describing incidents, personalities, conflicts and major events in some detail, writing into locally produced exercise books, filling most of the 120 pages every month. This was my opportunity to reflect, muse and speculate on how people and events were inter-related. I would 'round off' stories and tidy up loose ends that only came together over months, or else I would write at length about a particular topic that was bothering me. The following example illustrates my musing on why the bishop tolerated an 'illicit' relationship between a missionary priest and an overseas volunteer.

"November 1993 Notebook :

We feel like we're the only people it matters to, which isn't true of course. Sarah cares - she's livid at the bishop too apparently. She thinks it's disgraceful that not

only does he ignore it , but he actually seems to condone it. She's planning to go and speak to him. I pity him.

Well, actually, I don't. My opinion of the bishop, now based on what I've seen and experienced, and not just on the Pastoral Co-ordinator's PR, has changed quite a bit. He's a genial, civil and holy man, of that there's no doubt, but at home, we'd say he was a 'fly man' too. In short, Michael and I have concluded that he'll do anything for the almighty dollar. He's desperate for the cash. And who wouldn't be ? To be in charge of one of the poorest dioceses in the world can't be easy, though sometimes up at Ediofe, it's easy to forget the poverty in the rest of West Nile. The bishop, educated in Italy (and maybe even a spell in the USA) (no, don't think so) is a local man from down near Nebbi. He's been diagnosed diabetic, and in general isn't in great health. I hear that he has a child tucked away somewhere too whom he supports, but that's nothing new here. Anyway, for ages he's banked on Italian support-money- through the Comboni's mostly. Then, with an ageing Comboni congregation, and their new blood being from the new world rather than the west, he sees his financial base ebbing away. So, I think he's looking further afield, and who is here, right under his nose, but a volunteer who came directly from the second wealthiest Diocese in the Catholic world ? So, between the two of them, the priest and the volunteer are the promise of big bucks, and boy! - can they spend it !"

In addition to this, and to assist me in my analysis, I retained invitations, letters, speeches and other 'event' documents that accompanied the social life we pursued in Boraja. These have served to trigger other memories and to remind me of the peculiar formality that went with planning social events.

3.1.5.bTape-recording

I did not conduct extensive formal interviewing while in Boraja, nor did I tape record every interview I did conduct. It was the discourse of the everyday that interested me most, and so to interrupt the everyday with the staging of a formal interview was inconsistent with my methodology. To produce a tape-recorder in any conversational setting would have interrupted the flow of conversation, and done more harm than good. However, in an effort to substantiate my claims to being a 'researcher' as well as a teacher, and also to see how people would choose to portray themselves in a formal interview setting, I did conduct some interviews in my last months there. When these were transcribed, they provided me with verbatim quotations for illuminating text and narrative, with a richness that my own fieldnotes often lacked. There were three different interview types.

3.1.5.b.i Individual Boraja interviews

These interviews were carried out at pre-arranged times with certain key informants in Boraja - the parish priest, the hospital administrator, a visiting priest etc. These were people who had some history in Boraja, who had reflected on events and who could speak English very well. The presence of the tape-recorder did not inhibit their flow of dialogue, and they were quite pleased to assist me in collecting information about the place we all lived. These could be described as 'key informants', in the sense that Johnson (1990) implies, rather than Tremblay (1957), and I employed interviewing techniques to suit each individual informant, ranging from entirely conversational, to rigidly formal .

3.1.5.b.ii Group interviews

These interviews were carried out with the assistance of my colleague, Amaniyo Rosa, and could be described as 'focus groups' (see Goss *et al*, 1996, Morgan 1988). They involved small groups of local people who did not speak much English. Rosa and I would discuss who we would like to come, and she would 'send for' small groups of certain people ; catechists, old people (Mzees) or 'mission boys'. These interviews were perhaps the most formal of those conducted, and I followed Rosa's advice on what the 'informants' would expect or appreciate. I arranged chairs on the verandah of the house, and provided tea, sugar, biscuits, roasted ground nuts, bread rolls and fruit - a combination of local and 'European' hospitality⁸.

I prepared an interview schedule for Rosa, outlining my main areas of interest, and detailing particular questions within these. She was familiar with my research interests and the open-endedness of the enquiry, and understood that she was to respond to the answers she received, and could develop more detailed dialogue with the informants if it followed the general themes of the interview. She chose to have the interview schedule to hand, as it made her seem more 'official'. She introduced the informants to

⁸ When the 'Mzees' came to visit, they were enjoying the sugared tea and bread so much that Rosa had to tell me to stop bringing out more food, or else nothing would be said.

the main area of my research (the influence of outsiders in Boraja), and conducted the interviews in lugbara. Depending on the informant group, and on the responses to her questions, she would refer back to me in English, letting me know what was being said.

I am not blind to the many drawbacks of this type of interview, and the type of 'artificial' information yielded. The informants were not very relaxed, although they were happy to be 'invited' to participate. Afterwards, I heard that the news of the interviews went back to the villages, where descriptions of myself, the fare, the compound (and only incidentally, the questions) and the whole 'event' were relayed for hours in the evenings. I heard from several lugbara friends that the participants in the group interviews were delighted to have been asked, and that they hoped that they gave the 'right answers'. The latter sentiment of course, dismayed me, and highlighted that these informants tried to answer in a way that portrayed themselves and missionaries in a flattering light. In interpreting the data from these interviews, I must therefore consider not only the questions and the answers, but the translated questions and answers and the additional interpretative layer of 'expected' answers. In itself, it is interesting to examine these responses as evidence of what local people presumed I wanted to hear.

3.1.5.b.iii 'Expert' interviews

I conducted several interviews with key personnel in Arua and Boraja who worked for the diocese or for NGOs engaged in development projects in the area. These interviews varied in their structure, and often involved considerable financial detail, projects description and dates. Therefore tape-recording was an appropriate way of documenting this information.

3.1.5.b.iv Informal recordings

In addition to the recording of interviews with informants, from time to time I would record particular sounds and occasions taking place in Boraja. I recorded the peal of the mission bell, the raucous singing of the 'penitents' next door in the PLC as they prepared for Easter, and the more sedate choir of the school, as they entertained guests

at leaving feasts. I also recorded the Sunday mass, and the entire proceedings of our leaving feast. These recordings are valuable as 'texts' too, since they crystallise certain moments and occasions in Boraja life, both special and everyday. Recording the mass was a means of marking this everyweek event that was pivotal to mission life, but which I may not have described in detail in fieldnotes⁹. The recording transports me back to the heart of Boraja, I can hear the cocks crowing, children shouting, boys playing, bicycles passing by. It does more than remind me of the sights and sounds of everyday Boraja - it returns my consciousness to the place in which my fieldnotes were created. Listening to the tapes while reading my written texts has enabled me to contextualise events more accurately, in a manner more faithful to my actual experience. I therefore consider these recordings, even though they do not deliver 'information', as essential to my research.

3.1.6 Secondary sources

In addition to my fieldnotes and recordings, I gathered information pertaining to development and church activity in Arua Diocese. One of the most surprising things I encountered was the lack of record-keeping in the churches there. Only since the diocese had been headed by a Ugandan bishop, and since several major overseas development and aid agencies played a significant part in Diocesan work, had any attempt been made to account for monies being spent in the diocese. This situation alerted me to the conditions of paternalism that operated in different forms in the diocese. Therefore there was no material from the past with which to compare the present diocesan statistics (see Chapter 4). Apart from these accounts and reports, I also collected documents and materials related to the entire Diocese, with information on how the pastoral and non-pastoral activities interacted. I supplemented this with some

⁹ The mass, for instance, was one of the constants of mission life in Boraja. It set the rhythm for the week, it was the main gathering of all the Christians in the zone. It was a very public and open event. Women sat on one side of the church, men on the other. Children wriggled, dangled and fiddled on many laps, fed at the breast and giggled at us. Babies were wrapped on mothers' and sisters' backs, and were seldom heard to cry. People wore their best clothes; male teachers in ironed shirts and shiny shoes, many women in darned polyester dresses, with rubber 'slippers' (flip-flops) and kitenge wraps. Many were shoeless or dressed in second hand clothes from Europe or America. Sunday mass was also the time when the priest would deliver his sermon, and occasionally this would cause quite a stir. If something scandalous had happened during the week, this was the time to stare at the individual concerned and indulge in blatant gossip afterwards. People would linger and chat while students from

publications produced by various diocesan offices, such as a collected edition of prize-winning essays in a competition run by the Diocesan Education Office, where local teachers described local birth rites and traditions. I also collected the annual reports and project reports of the main NGOs operating in the area, where these were available, and bought copies of the Government Statistical publications in Kampala. Throughout my time in West Nile, I also kept newspaper clippings from local and national newspapers.

In addition, I learned of a Comboni priest in Kampala who was conducting research on the history of the Comboni Fathers in Uganda. He provided me with transcripts of the letters and diaries of the first evangelising Comboni missionaries to arrive in northern Uganda from Sudan. Once these were translated from Italian, they illustrated how some of the contemporary struggles of missionaries were in fact common at the turn of the century. Finally, I examined dissertations and theses in Makerere University which were written about West Nile or Christian Missionaries, or which had been completed by West Nile students¹⁰. I read these for content, but also for tone and perspective.

3.2 Analysing Ethnography

The ethnographic method of analysis is not a discrete and separate event from the fieldwork endeavour. Ethnography is more of a process than a set of distinct steps or analytical tools, and it stretches from the initial formulation of the 'problem' to the final writing up of the research conclusions. The ideas that I use to explain what I found in Boraja evolved here, there and here again. The data collected feeds back into the research design which in turn informs the analysis. In this way, "theory building and data collection are dialectically linked" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:174).

Glaser and Strauss developed the 'Grounded Theory' analysis (1967) in which the collection of data is guided strategically by the developing theory. Grounded theory has

the schools would preen and flirt.

¹⁰ The dearth of such studies only served to remind me of how difficult it has always been for students from the north and north-west of the country to enter higher education at Makerere.

its roots in phenomenology, on the basis that all perception is reducible to mental experience via the senses and as such, everyday experiences mould the concepts that explain them (Beard and Easingwood 1989). To avoid the 'it's all happening elsewhere syndrome' described by Lacey (1976), ethnography 'funnels' the research structure as it progresses, and the research problem is clarified and delimited as it is explored. Ethnographic accounts range from narrative life histories (Personal Narratives Group 1989) to models based on the social processes elicited from the analytical categories emerging from narratives (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

The image of 'funnelling' does illustrate how my analysis proceeded. On return from the field, I immersed myself in reading my fieldnotes and diaries, listening to recordings of mission voices and sounds, gathering documents, ordering files and collecting my thoughts, memories and reflections. I continued to correspond with informants in the field, so narratives sometimes continued (in their voices) after I had left Boraja.

From my diaries, I 'pulled apart' the structure of my time in the field. I accounted for how long I spent in each location, and how often I spoke to whom. I annotated, abbreviated and paraphrased my fieldnotes extensively, drawing out the main events and stories that had evolved over time, highlighted with particular incidents and revelations. Through this process, I reflected on the interplay of people and events, and gradually after repeated attempts to describe and explain Boraja, several main themes emerged that I felt framed the complex mission life I had experienced. The 'emergence' of these themes was influenced by the available literature in gender and development, mission studies and cultural geography, and by the tenacity of these themes in my many and layered reflections on Boraja. I would describe this process of analysis as a 'distillation' of the essences and pivots of the mission life I experienced and witnessed ; the rather strict and rigorous categorisation process of Glaser and Strauss's 'Grounded Theory' was not suitable for this process, although its central phenomenological tenets and its methodology of reworking categories did inform my particular process.

3.3 Ethical concerns and dilemmas

In this final section I explore the ethical considerations that shaped my ethnography while I was in Africa and since I have returned. These again spring from several facets of myself, the full person who happens to be an ethnographer, but it is reassuring to see the ethical debate gaining momentum within ethnography and geography itself. My concerns fall into three main categories, which reflect the conclusions made by Madge (1997:114) that 'ethical research' is research that 'does no harm', which gains informed consent from, and which respects the rights of, the individuals being studied. The first is the issue of reciprocity, something which frames the ethnographers' presence and function in the field, as discussed by Robson 1997, but implicitly addressed by Scheper-Hughes in her methodological and epistemological position as a Health Work volunteer in Brazil (Scheper-Hughes 1992). The second issue refers more directly to the methods of eliciting ethnographic material from 'informants', and is about gaining informed consent. How 'right' is it for me to appropriate 'common' knowledge without informing everyone present of my ultimate intentions? The third issue which I address here becomes relevant when I re-enter my own (academic) milieu, and attend to the risks of knowledge transfer. This extends the debate on 'control' of representation, questioning the 'control' I have over my acquired knowledge, when it is in written text and in the public domain. These concerns reflected onto my methodological practices and the decisions I made in the field and at home.

3.3.1 Giving and taking, and 'doing no harm'.

Robson (1997:66) discusses some of the problems associated with indebtedness and reciprocity towards informants, but dwells on the material implications of this, rather than the intellectual or emotional dimensions of reciprocity. It is not only a matter of 'paying' informants with cash or goods, it is also a matter of considering the overall impact of your presence in the field upon the informants you are so dependent on.

In the pursuit of a research-based higher degree, and purely in terms of formal academic qualifications, it was clear to me what I stood to gain from my time in Boraja. That I gained so much more from the experience was unanticipated and humbling. The sense

of indebtedness grew from my first months in Boraja, and like many volunteers and researchers living in another community, I felt the need to reciprocate the generosity and kindness shown to me (Robson 1997, Francis 1992). As I discussed earlier, I anticipated this sense of 'needing to give something back', but I entirely underestimated the its depth. My role as a full time teacher and administrator in the school therefore not only provided me, in methodological terms, with something to do, and access to in-depth research material on womens' lives in mission places, but, in personal and ethical terms, it did begin to redress the indebtedness that swamped me, and did 'give back' something to the people among whom I lived. Not enough, but something.

The job was identified by the school administration, and the local Bishop requested a volunteer for the post. The post was a 'stop-gap' placement, enabling a local woman to leave for formal training in Kampala. I did not feel that I was depriving a local person of a job, since there was no salary available for a local temporary replacement for this woman. While in the post, I did try to stretch myself, and took on associated duties in extra-curricular and administrative work. Outside school, I helped the local women's group with its administration, our vehicle became a general parish means of transport, and I engaged in informal tutoring of several local women who had slipped from formal education. This is all I could offer in terms of 'repaying' the entire local community for the information that they made available to me in the everyday exchanges and inter-connections of my ethnographic life in Boraja. Materially, I acknowledged the co-operation of those who came for 'formal' tape-recorded interviews with refreshments and cash payments as my local colleague deemed appropriate. I also paid my local colleague for her help in interviewing and translation, at a rate comparable to what she received for conducting surveys for the UN on refugees. However, I still feel that I 'took' much more than I 'gave', and can only agree with Robson when she says, "In the end, perhaps, the researcher has to accept that the debt to the researched can not be repaid" (1997:66).

3.3.2 Appropriating common knowledge and gaining informed consent

It is probably the idealistic desire of every ethnographer to enter and leave the field without causing any ripples on the surface of the subject community since this would enhance the 'authenticity' of the research and minimise the potential damage of the researcher's presence. This notion reminds me of the 'salvage ethnography' that regards the 'other' as uncontaminated and endangered (Katz 1992, Fabian 1983), and which places the ethnographer in a very separate place from the subject, presumably engaged in 'covert' 'complete observer' research. I was not so naive as to think that my presence would cause no ripples in the waters of life in Boraja, but I tried to contain and control my impact within the boundaries of the local expectations of myself, and certainly worked against causing any 'harm' (Robson 1997). It is incredibly difficult to gauge the impression we left on the community where we lived. The basic fact that I am considering the ethics implicated in my research endeavour at all, is in part rooted in the fact that I now *know* the people I am writing about, and this matters.

While in Boraja I did not engage in what I would consider to be 'covert' research ; I did not disguise my identity as researcher, although people usually identified me as a teacher. Initially this was due to my reticence to advertise my 'researcher' identity (as I discussed in 3.1.2.c). In the latter months of my stay, I advertised my researcher status in a very explicit manner. The visits of interviewees became a new topic of conversation in the mission place and in the local villages. When I was travelling into Arua every week, heavily pregnant and using the mountain route in the rainy season, people commented that it was for 'her research there on the missionaries and our development'.

However, I did not make my ethnographic method so public. Chatting in the staff room, in a friend's compound, having tea or shelling peas, I participated in conversations that were fed by "Did you hear ...?", "You cannot be serious!" and "You will not believe what I have just heard from Bako Rose who has just returned from Ediofe ...". Was this gossip? Of course it was, and as such it was the mobile and nuanced versions of local 'truths' (the communal discourse) that circulated in a very real way around the mission

places of the district. These were 'facts' that could not be verified, checked or even substantiated. A strong or persistent rumour was a powerful force in the Mission place. It could generate further 'truths', and become established 'fact' by virtue of its longevity. Whether, for example, the Secretary of the Lay Assistants *had* actually used some of the Association's anniversary fund to finance her boyfriend's new business in selling beer, or *not*, this was the story that was circulating about her. The story, the rumour, the gossip is as real in the daily discourse of mission life as the 'facts' or the 'truth'. It has a strength and power that the 'true' version of events often denies. Also, of real significance are the routes that these stories take, to enter the communal discourse that becomes the 'everyday'.

I believe that the stories of the mission place are valid for ethnographic research, whether they are substantiated retrospectively or not. Of course, certain stories are invalidated very soon after they emerge, and local attention was usually turned back towards the main story tellers, and their circumstances would then be subjected to local scrutiny. Other stories were borne out as 'true', while others were rewoven into a more complex and intricate story, becoming part of local legends. In my ethnography, I recorded these stories as they were revealed to me. This was information which was in the 'public domain' of mission, parish and Diocesan life. If appropriate, I would explicitly 'check' the information, and would only give significant value to a story that reached me through several sources. There were a few local friends with whom I could discuss almost all the stories I heard, and I relied upon their wisdom and integrity to screen certain stories. If a story reached my ears through a local person in Boraja, I was certain that I was not only the last in the mission to hear it, but that I was hearing it rather deliberately. The passing of certain stories to us was sometimes a political act, meant to embarrass the subject of the story. The following extract, from edited fieldnotes (June 1995) based on diary and notebook entries for August 1994, illustrates two points. The first is how I might hear and record common discourse focusing on one person who might not talk to me about the particular issue, and the second is how Michael and I were used strategically by local people as 'markers' in common discourse.

"After weeks of stories about the relationship between Sister Matron and Mr. Kaba, a trader in town, Michael was driving her into Arua. After a very

acrimonious encounter at the diocesan workshop, when Michael waited to witness the opening of the Hospital safe (having been advised by a hospital administrator that Matron was likely to transfer the cash directly to Mr.Kaba), she asked to be left in to the town centre. Normally, the hospital vehicle would wait outside the shop of Mr. Kaba (Western Pelican), since he supposedly kept an eye on it, but since the stories had broken, the hospital driver had avoided that area of town. Sister Matron told Michael to drive to 'Western Pelican', but Michael refused, saying, "There ? No Way !", while driving to the other side of the street. At this point, Matron realised that Michael and I had heard the rumours about herself and Kaba, and she became very angry. She demanded to know why Michael would not park at Western Pelican, and Michael refused to be drawn. Emotions were running very high, they parted angry, and the day ended with the pair having a huge argument. They were both referring implicitly to the same story, yet if either mentioned the actual rumour, the potency of their argument would have dissolved as the knowledge moved into the public domain of substantiation and apology. Matron's anger was not so much addressed to Michael himself, but at the many people who had obviously told us enough of the stories for Michael to refuse to park outside Western Pelican, and to feel that he did not have to explain why. Little in their disagreement was said explicitly, but Matron's obvious anger and distress registered, when she realised just how far the stories had travelled, and from Michael's behaviour, it was fairly clear that he had believed whatever he had heard."

The point of this illustration is to indicate the significance attached to stories, once they had travelled as far as my ears. The spreading of stories was not completely random as far as our access to them was concerned: telling myself or Michael a story was sometimes a political act which could even propel the story further, if we sought to verify it. I recorded these stories and the events that surrounded them since they were a constitutive part of the local power dynamic that moulded mission and Diocesan life. While we were there, we were part of the dynamic.

However, I did not pop round to the convent next door a few days later to inform Matron that I had written down the stories that I had heard about her, nor did I ask her permission beforehand to do so. The story was not particularly 'hers', but she was the main character in it. In retrospective analysis, her role has emerged as very significant in understanding some of the underlying contradictions of 'development' in a mission place, and as such, I feel that she should have access to the analysis that I have drawn from my time in Boraja. Yet, I did not interview her specifically for my research in the

obvious way that the Mzees were, nor did I gain her 'informed consent'. Had she known that I was also taking note of the stories of the place, she might have defended herself, and presented herself in a more favourable light to me. But she just thought that I was a teacher, married to an infuriating engineer, who was also doing some interviews with the Mzees and catechists about missionaries. In recording and analysing my version of her story, I try to do so in a way that does not sensationalise the situation, and which presents a fuller explanation of why certain people may 'break certain rules', in a way that may question the 'rules' rather than the person whose circumstances I describe.

3.3.2.a Silent voices

It remains that in the representation of these stories, narratives and events that the principal voice to be heard is mine. This, despite my unease of transferring my values and perspectives onto the representation of 'others' stories, and my support for moves to give voice to 'others' on the margins. However, a considerable part of the communal discourse that represented the boundary contests of individuals' imagined spaces was of a sensitive and intimate nature. Referring to 'transgression', 'sins' and the 'breaking of rules' and terms of accountability, these were not discussed as openly as other elements of communal discourse or other codes of accountability. While stories about embezzlement and sexual 'misbehaviour' were the most 'urgent' topics of local conversation, they were spread in hushed and often coded ways. In terms of language, the vernacular was most often used, so when the stories were shared with me, the translation into English lost some meaning, while certain English words acquired coded meanings in order to retain the 'secrecy' of the story. For example, to describe a woman as the 'friend' of the 'personal secretary' of a man, is to identify them as lovers. In a similar vein, as these stories circulated around the locality, part of the telling was rendered silent, replaced by bodily gestures, often as eye movements. Finally, add to this the fact that *telling me* carried meaning in itself, and the 'other' voices became very obscured.

Verbatim quotations are rare in my representation of the boundary-shaking events. The testing of terms of accountability at these times is both very private *and* very public, but the tension between the public discourse on private circumstances and struggles impacts directly upon my representation of the story, and makes the main voice my own.

Therefore, to a degree the ethnographic method implicitly denies the prerequisite of 'informed consent' that Madge (and Cassell and Wax 1980, Hall 1982, Wilson 1992) considers necessary for 'ethical research'. By using material from the communal discourse which is in the common domain, and which is sometimes wafted in the direction of the researcher for a separate, political reason, is at the root of ethnography. But what happens when ethnographers come 'home', think about what they have witnessed, and come up with a set of conclusions that the very people who informed their ethnography would hate to hear ?

3.3.3 Blowing the whistle - where does the knowledge go ?

The third strand of my unease about my field research concerns the product of my time in Boraja, and attends to the risks of knowledge transfer. Having returned to the western academy, I am presently in the process of producing a thesis, which will hopefully result in a PhD for me. My thesis will rest on the shelves of the University Library, where anybody can read it. Furthermore, if I want to pursue an academic career, it will be necessary for me to publish papers based on my PhD research, to talk about Boraja at conferences and to share my insights into the dynamics of 'developing' Mission places. Each of these fora publicises the stories that I have appropriated for my own purposes from the 'open' or 'closed' domain of communal discourse in Boraja. The people in Boraja, whether they are the people who shared the stories with me, or the people who feature in the stories, have no control over what I may say about them. They cannot argue against my representation of them, nor defend themselves to my audience. Most of them are unaware that they even informed my research in they way that they have. And am I really giving voice to the subaltern in my analysis ? So, despite all my niggles of conscience about being open, about 'giving' as well as 'taking'

and about representing the 'other' in a fair and sensitive manner, at the end of the day, I can say what I like. The knowledge that I have brought back with me is now mine, to use as I choose.

There are several mitigating factors which soften the charges I lay against myself. The ethnographic method means that I could not fully anticipate some of the conclusions that I feel would be unpopular in Boraja, and therefore, it would have been impossible to gain informed consent. The constraints of time operating on the completion of a PhD thesis deny me the opportunity to re-engage with the people of Boraja. I cannot let everyone in my stories see what I have written, or give them a chance to edit and endorse them (Personal Narrative Group 1989), since I do not have the resources to do so. I will endeavour to obscure the identities of the mission place, and the people who feature in my thesis, although it will remain located in West Nile, since the regional identity is significant in its missiological and historical setting.

On another level, I have further unease about "Blowing the whistle" on certain activities that take place in the mission place, that people there might not wish to be made public. The fact that Catholic priests engage in intimate relations with parishioners is widely known, and much has been said about the particular case of African priests' difficulty with celibacy, given the culture from which they spring (Hastings 1967). However, to detail how these relationships have a significant bearing on other aspects of ministry and development is less common. Also, to describe how the recipients of overseas aid mismanage the funds they receive and try to manipulate accounts and reports to disguise mismanagement, is somehow 'Blowing the whistle' on people who are struggling not only with their own poverty, but also with outsiders' ideas and control over how it should be relieved. One possible outcome of my research, focusing on the difference between what happens in development projects and how it is reported to donors, would be the withdrawal of funding. I would be appalled if I were somehow responsible for this, since the fact remains that some development projects do 'hit their mark' in both local and donor terms, and are remarkably successful. Since most field officers for overseas development agencies have been volunteers in the past, there

should be a general level of awareness of the truths underlying project reportage, although the intricacies of project implementation are not often scrutinised at the level that I present.

I must exercise caution therefore, in the dissemination of my research findings. If I am not going to send a copy of the thesis to the mission place or to the diocese, then the least I can do, is to try and control the spread of this sensitive information. There are certain stories which I have decided not to relate within my thesis, since they were too 'private' to be described as being in the public domain. The stories which do find a place in my analysis are used to make a point beyond the facts of the tale, and are related as 'anonymously' as possible. A broader concern is perhaps the forum in which I make the intimate details of mission life public. The western academy is very much part of the western world that contributes to much of what makes life difficult for people in places like Boraja. As Madge (1997) admits :

"Academic geographers are part of a system of knowledge production that has systematically undermined and dislodged Third World thought systems ... and created powerful institutions of knowledge which are located in the First World, .. and often (but not always) viewed from the perspective of the First World."

This is the 'academic imperialism' that Ake spoke of (1979), where we in the west somehow manage to twist even our guilt about the Third world to our own advantage. The academy of which I am part sets out the boundaries of what is good research and what isn't; its preconditions for research, means of disseminating knowledge and even the definition of ethics within research all channel back into the academy itself. The Third World in particular seems to have been hijacked as a cause by western academics, in our language and in our own terms (Ngugi Wa Thiong'o 1992). I would hope that the debate on ethics presently swelling the tomes of academic publications will pay heed to itself, and that this imbalance, in the very organ that studies its imbalance, will be redressed (see Keith 1992, Katz 1992, Sidaway 1992).

3.4 Conclusion

Ultimately, the overall structure of my thesis places all responsibility for interpretation of the stories with me. By using the conceptual framework of 'imagined spaces', it is clear to the reader that my narration of mission life is a text for which I am responsible. The reader must take 'me' into account as the analysis unravels. Furthermore, there is the real sense in which the relationships involved in my ethnography have been 'used' by me to produce the text. This echoes Whatmore's concerns about relational ethics (1997), and is a consideration which also alludes to my earlier point about the full person who engages in ethnography. This conceptual framework is making its own theoretical point about how we think about the 'other' and how the 'other' is represented, but it also serves to contextualise my portrayal of the very real and urgent issues of poverty, inequality and cultural conflict back towards the academic discourse from which it is viewed.

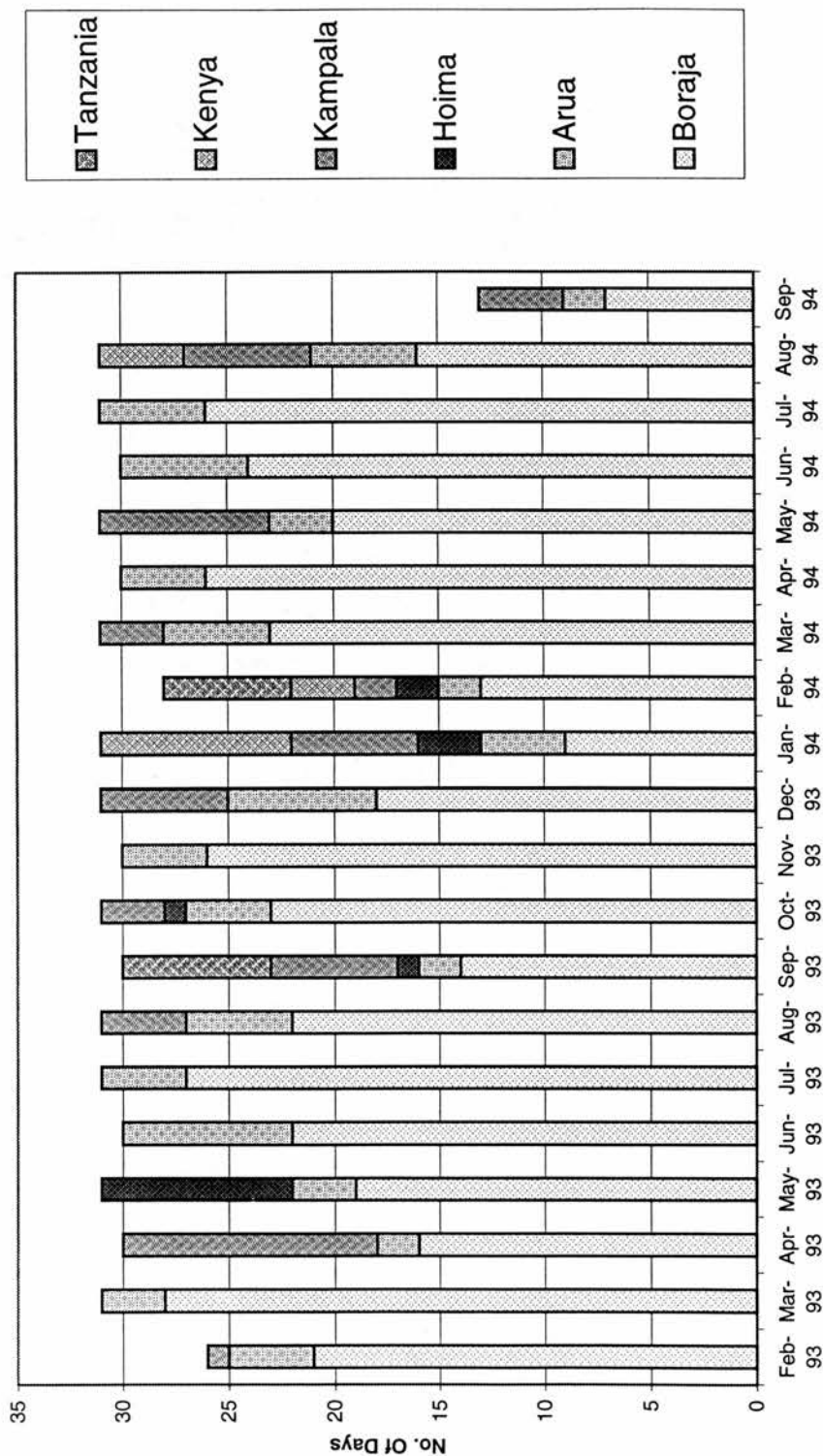


Fig. 3.1 Histogram to show Fieldwork location Feb 93 - Sep 94

Figure 3.2 : Taped Interviews (Individual, Expert and Group) conducted in Boraja and Arua, 1993/1994

NAME	OCCUPATION	INTERVIEW TYPE	LENGTH	TAPE NO.
Joy Grinday	European Missionary	Individual Interview	3hr	Tape 1,2
Osoa Bosco & Dramani Augusto	Lugbara Catechists	Group Interview	1.5hr	Tape 3,4
Gracian Waigo	Diocesan Administrator	Individual Interview	2hr	Tape 5,6
Kathie Asikii	European Volunteer	Individual Interview	1.5hr	Tape 7,8
Daniel Ojobile	Diocesan Priest	Individual Interview	1hr	Tape 9
Cici & Madua Charles	Mission 'boys'	Group Interview	1hr	Tape 10
Sarah Orache	Hospital Administrator	Individual Interview	2hr	Tape 11,12
Sabino Anyuzo	Diocesan Administrator	Expert Interview	1hr	Tape 13
Terry Cross	NGO Project Manager	Expert Interview	1hr	Tape 14
Mzees: Drakuru Claria & Anyaria Peter & Adima Joseph & Aseii Kassiano & Olali Ezira	Elderly Parishioners	Group Interview	1.5hr	Tape 15
Peter Debo	Diocesan Priest	Individual Interview	1.5hr	Tape 16,17
Andreas Worhl	Diocesan Project Manager	Expert Interview	2hr	Tape 18,19
Rudi Deuber	Diocesan Project Co-ord'	Expert Interview	1.5hr	Tape 20

Chapter Four : Setting the Scene

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to 'set the scene' empirically for the fieldwork analysis that follows. It provides the context for the situations I interpret in Boraja. I briefly look at the recent history of West Nile and the legacy of war in the region, since this is the shared experience of most of the people in Boraja. Then, I turn my attention to Arua Diocese. In this section I describe the ways in which the Diocese operates in relation to development initiatives, and provide statistical data on the conditions experienced by people in the West Nile, focusing particularly on women's development, education and health (which later provide a structure for the thesis analysis). In an exploratory way, I discuss the dilemmas faced by the administrator of the Diocese, Bishop Frederick Drandua, highlighting the difficulties he faces in managing an African diocese in which his clergy, his staff and his 'flock' struggle to reconcile the 'traditional' belief systems they have inherited culturally, with the Christian beliefs they have inherited from the missionaries. Finally, I invite the reader to accompany me, as an outsider, through the former mission place at Boraja, where I set the scene for local events and situations. The chapter is accompanied by an appendix (2), which offers historical contextual details for the circumstances described here.

4.2 West Nile

Physically, West Nile is appended like an afterthought to Uganda. It is the area west of the Nile as it runs north from Lake Albert into Sudan, with the rest of the country lying to 'the other side' of the Nile. Administratively, the region is made up of the three districts of Nebbi, Arua and Moyo, which stretches across the Nile on its eastern bank (see Map 1). The region covers 6,046 sq miles, and has a population of 1,119,000¹. Its main ethnic groups are the Alur in the south, the majority Lugbara in the central belt, who are

¹ Based on 1991 population census. Arua District had 624,600 people in eight counties, Nebbi District

related to the Madi, located further to the north and on the eastern banks of the Nile. Other significant ethnic/linguistic groupings are the Jonam (of Jonam County in Nebbi District), the Kakwa (of Koboko County in Arua District) and the Gimare (of Obongi County in Moyo District). Kebu, Lendu and a number of other minor tribes are present in small numbers in the region (see Map 2).

The mission place where I conducted my fieldwork is in Arua District, where the principal inhabitants are lugbara. Farming is the main occupation, both subsistence and commodity cropping. Some farmers grow tobacco to sell through co-operatives to BAT². Otherwise, the main crops grown are cassava, groundnuts, millet, sorghum, maize, potatoes, cotton, greens and vegetables. Cassava, “the poor man’s food”, is the staple food; the tubers are dried, crushed, ground and mixed into a dough called ‘enya’, the lugbara word for ‘food’³. Most people also raise chickens, goats, pigs and cows. All produce may sometimes be traded at market or in social exchanges.

4.2.1 The legacy of a local man

West Nile’s recent history became marked by the fact that its northernmost ethnic group gave birth to the most renowned dictator in modern African history, Idi Amin (Low 1988, Mamdani 1983). Born to a Kakwa father and raised by a Lugbara mother in army barracks near Koboko, he is the son of West Nile that is infamous throughout the world for his tyranny and brutality (Hills 1992, Jorgenson 1981, Smith 1980). With the Acholi, the tribal groups of West Nile are caricatured in the south of the country as ‘millet eaters’⁴, as ‘crazy, lazy, fierce and very black’⁵. West Nile did not

had 315,900 in three counties and Moyo District had 178,500 in three counties.

² British-American Tobacco Company.

³ After the famine of 1942-43, the British administration made it compulsory for every man to grow a field of cassava, a high-yielding crop which is easy to grow and store.

⁴ ‘Millet-eater’ is a derogatory term targeted at people whose diet is plain, by those in the south whose diet is based on maize or plantain. In fact, since the ‘Disturbances’ of the 1980s, the staple food of the lugbara has been the even more basic cassava, whose yield is high but whose nutritional content is not.

enjoy particular prosperity during Amin's reign; indeed some of his most vicious campaigns were against those from the region he felt most betrayed by. However, the towns of Arua and Koboko had electricity generators installed and as a woman in Boraja recalls "In Dada's time, at least the buses were on time"⁶(diary, June 23rd 1993).

As a result of his links with the area, West Nile suffered wave after wave of military retreats and advances across its land after he was deposed in 1979. Amin's soldiers, Tanzanian troops, UNRP forces and most memorably, Obote's UNLA under the command of Museveni, swept through the region wreaking devastation (Woodward 1988, Kokole 1995). Obote is reputed to have declared his intention to clear West Nile of its population and turn the region into a game park (Allen 1992: 222). There were both tribal and religious dimensions to the reprisals, and the Kakwa, and the town of Koboko were particularly targeted for retribution, while the Lugbara and Madi did not fare much better. The Alur, related to Obote's own Langi tribe escaped the worst of the trouble. Across the district, however, Catholics felt particularly persecuted because Obote was a Protestant from the UPC party, and it is true that the buildings and institutes of the Catholic Diocese of Arua suffered much more serious damage in this time than those of the Anglican Diocese of Madi and West Nile. However, people of every tribe and of every religion simply 'fled' across the Zairian and Sudanese borders to the west and north, taking only whatever they could carry, and often robbed of this paltry amount at the border. Later, these refugees became the targets of various rebel groups and the forces seeking them, and they began to return to Uganda in 1984. The period between 1979 and 1986, when political stability returned to Uganda is still known locally as 'the disturbances'.

⁵ In Uganda, despite the efforts of nationalist and feminist groups to affirm that 'Black is Beautiful', the various shades of black and brown skin are attributed beauty status, with fairer complexions being considered generally more attractive. To describe northerners as 'very black' is therefore tantamount to an insult, and the description of northerners in the text was one used by a southern/Baganda trader to me, when he heard that I was working in the north.

⁶ Amin appended the nickname 'Dada' to his name to denote the affection in which he was supposedly held by his people. Others remember the name being ascribed to him when he was caught fleeing a political insurrection early in his career, and 'Dada' being a nickname for 'coward'.

The borders that define West Nile have seen oscillating waves of hope and despair to and fro in desperation, and aid workers today identify this simmering insecurity among the people as presenting the most significant obstacle to resettlement programmes. The following comment illustrates this difficulty :

“How can we expect people to make 5 year agricultural plans when they can barely trust in next week?”(Worhl, Tape 19, July 1994)⁷.

Although generally distrustful of Museveni, the people of West Nile returned in significant numbers when he took power in 1986. Through Museveni's Resistance Movement's RC system, the villages, towns and parishes of West Nile reorganised, focusing on re-establishing networks of support and development for the devastated area⁸. With lingering insurrection in the north, most notably in Alice Lakwena's Holy Spirit Movement in neighbouring Gulu and Kitgum districts (see Natakunda-Togboa 1991, Behrend 1995), security was Museveni's primary concern for the region, and resources were scarce for humanitarian and developmental projects (McKenzie-Smith 1993).

Relief supplies en route to the region through insecure areas and on dirt roads often never reached West Nile⁹. Aid was often channelled through the church structures which had survived the insecurity, and which were distributing aid from overseas churches already. Church networks became major conduits of emergency relief, and later, of long-term developmental

⁷ Another dimension of this insecurity was illustrated when government advisors visited Boraja Hospital to inform the staff about a contributory pension scheme that had recently been set up for healthcare workers. The basic concept of saving incrementally for 'retirement' was treated with disbelief and ridicule by even the most senior of staff.

⁸The National Resistance Movement (NRM) developed a decentralised political system of 'Resistance Councils' and Committees (RCs). There are 5 levels of locally elected representative committees. All citizens over 18 years constitute the village Resistance Council (RC1) and are eligible to vote in local village resistance committee elections. RC1 is the village level (representing communities ranging from 30 to 150 households). RC2 is parish level, RC3 is sub-county level, RC4 is county level, and RC5 is the district committee.

⁹According to UNHCR figures during the first five months of their operation up until January 1987, only 10% of expected cereals, 14% of beans, 12.5% of cooking oil and 20% of salt arrived in the area

initiatives¹⁰.

4.2.2 How West Nile compares : 1993

With this legacy of chaos and poverty, the districts of West Nile perform very poorly in a comparative analysis of 'basic indicators of wellbeing', with Uganda as a whole, and which selected other African nations, chosen to illustrate the range of experiences among nations adjacent to, and quite distant from Uganda (see Table 4.1).

The infant mortality rate (IMR) in West Nile is much higher than Uganda (and most African nations), and while the fertility rates are slightly lower than the Ugandan national average, West Nile's are high for Africa as a whole. Adult literacy rates are lower than nationally, but not the lowest in the country or the continent. Female literacy again in West Nile is lower than nationally, but still higher than the lowest rates in Uganda or in Africa. The rates of AIDS cases per million people averages 550 in Uganda (ranking it the highest in Africa), and although there are fewer cases in West Nile, the rate is high, particularly in Nebbi district¹¹. Uganda's GNP remains among the lowest in Africa, and within Uganda, the northern average monthly household income (37,000ush) is the lowest in the country (national average 52,230ush). These are but crude measurements of the region's wellbeing, which I nonetheless frequently heard described by visiting overseas aid consultants, well-travelled throughout Africa and the developing world, as "the undiscovered corner of Africa" and "Uganda's best kept secret"¹². In doing so, they echoed the colonialist words of

for distribution to returnees.

¹⁰ See Green 1993 for a comparison with Pogoro, Tanzania.

¹¹ There has been extensive research carried out on the incidence (UAC, HIV/AIDS Situation 1994), spread (see Forester *et al* 1988, Moodie *et al* 1991, Schopper *et al* 1992) and socio-economic impact (see Armstrong and Ainsworth 1991, Dunn 1992, Katahoire 1993) of the HIV virus and AIDS since it was first reported in the Rakai district of the country in 1982. Uganda's 'AIDS profile' has been particularly high internationally, and its status as the African nation with the highest rate of the virus and the disease is as much to do with its vigilance in reporting it, as other nations' reluctance to address or publicise the problem.

¹² These comments were made respectively by a British aid consultant carrying out a viability study for a large church-funded project in Arua, and by a north American scholar who had worked for many years in north and east Africa.

Winston Churchill's famous "Pearl of Africa" description (1908).

To set these statistics into some context, Table 4.2 places the statistics for Uganda into stark comparison with those for the UK – how I experience wellbeing in these terms. I offer this contrast solely for the purpose of setting some immediate and personal context for the fieldwork accounts and personal narratives from Boraja which follow in this thesis, and which I construct. It also serves to set a sense of the global and local tension that overshadows this research, recalling the positions that I, the researcher, and the people of Boraja, the researched, occupied in these terms.

In whatever terms, the women of Boraja have more children, but see them die sooner than I. They are less likely to read and write than even their husbands and sons, and have much less chance of a formal education than I. Their cash income is neither reliable or adequate to live on, not to mention much less than mine. They have half my access to health care and clean water, and are more likely to see friends and family die of AIDS than I. Ultimately I can expect to live to an old age, they will be lucky to see 50.

I will now consider the Catholic Diocese of Arua, the 'nest' in which the church and institutions of the former mission at Boraja exist; the administrative, educational and healthcare framework that my fieldwork is situated in. By illustrating some of the problems in defining and achieving 'accountability' at Diocesan level, it becomes clearer how 'accountability' at parish, mission and individual levels is compromised in similar ways.

4.3 Arua Diocese

In 1994 Arua Diocese covered the same area as the region of West Nile, and served a population of some 680,000 Catholics¹³ spread over 34 parishes. Of its 100 priests, 65 are Diocesan, local men, and 26 are Comboni missionaries. Map 3 illustrates the distribution of religious

¹³ In 1996, Arua Diocese split into two, along the same lines as the Church of Ugandan Diocese did in

communities and pastoral facilities in the diocese. The numbers of religious reflects the main trend of the global pattern, where there are approximately twice as many women religious serving in the church as male clergy and religious. However, in Arua Diocese, the ratio is 5:1, with women religious outnumbering the male by 227 to 47.

4.3.1 The Missionary Inheritance :1986

Bishop Frederick Drandua, a lugbara man from the southern part of West Nile, was ordained as Bishop of Arua Diocese in 1986, the first Ugandan in the post. He inherited a Diocese heavily weighted by dependence on foreign assistance and influence. In economic terms, the region was experiencing its darkest hour since independence - people were returning from exile, homeless, hungry, displaced and with neither sustenance nor income. The various armies and rebel forces that had used the area as a battleground had left homes ransacked and neglected. Fields were untended, all subsistence and cash crops destroyed; institutions and businesses were empty and derelict. Gun battles between different factions, retreating armies and isolated snipers had taken place in and around the mission compounds, destroying the windows, walls and structures of the buildings. After the 'massacre' at Ombaci in 1981, most missionaries left West Nile, either to return to their home countries, or to join the Ugandan refugees in neighbouring countries¹⁴. By the time the various military forces had spent their munitions, the Catholic missions of West Nile lay in ruins, empty, desolate and eerily abandoned.

Later, when people returned, the displacement of families, returning disparately and randomly, not knowing who survived or died meant that there was social chaos. Immediate and extended families had often been fragmented while in exile, where other unions formed and new families

1994. The new diocese, Nebbi Diocese, roughly covers Nebbi district; the land of the Alur people.

¹⁴ In January 1982, Ombaci mission. Outside Arua became the site of one of the worst atrocities during the Disturbances outside Luwero. Many civilians, aid officials, European medical volunteers and civilians were sheltering in the Comboni mission during a particularly tense time in the strife. UNLA soldiers, suspecting that UNRP troops were hiding there, opened fire on the whole compound. One hundred civilians died, including 8 Comboni's. The International Red Cross reported on the incident and were ordered to leave the country in March 1982.

begun. Returnees found disjointed connections with families old and new, while households readjusted for social and economic survival again. Women became heads of households and had to adopt income-generating roles that had previously been denied them, while men, lost to war or migration returned with new wives and more children. Former soldiers often could not return home at all, since their role in the brutality was known. Those that did, returned with their minds disturbed, and adopted the dislocated lives of 'madmen'¹⁵ This economic and social chaos, and the attendant health, educational and agricultural demands of a returning population lay alongside the spiritual needs of a community scarred by its experience. The Comboni Fathers, Brothers and Sisters returned with the refugees to find their missions and parishes in ruins. While the United Nations and major relief organisations started cranking up the massive refugee relief programme which was inevitably called for, these European missionaries adopted the ad-hoc and direct approach that characterised their historical intervention in the area. On an individual basis, the missionaries embarked upon their own restoration agenda, each reflecting their own priorities and agendas. A local woman recalled, " some they go home, they take photographs and they go home and explain all that has happened, and then they come and renovate the churches, their residence in the parish, and so forth.." (Diary, March 24th 1993).

Drandua's appointment marked an end to reference to Italy for guidance on both spiritual and developmental terms. After the 'disturbances', when the agendas of 'mission' work and 'development' work coincided, there were a few years in which the major task at hand was the refurbishment of the Diocese and the rehabilitation of the District. The overlapping agendas of

¹⁵ A sadly common feature in many rural places of Uganda, 'madmen' roamed the villages and institutions of their former homeplaces, dressed in rags, unwashed and begging food and shelter. Despite their past, there was a communal tolerance and concern for such men, who seldom went hungry. One such man in Boraja, Olío, wore an old cloak which he told people was the special uniform given by Amin to his special corps of soldiers at the barracks at Pakwach, the cloak they wore to conduct beheadings. Orley's (1970) study of Ugandan constructions of mental illness discusses the ways in which local perceptions, experiences and treatments of 'madness' differ from western medical forms.

individual parish appeals, applications to secular NGOs, and project proposals sent to Church/Aid NGOs created a confusing blur of multi-sourced money flooding into West Nile. That the 'liberation' from missionary ties coincided with a replacement dependency for 'aid' and 'relief' meant that the era of foreign influence in West Nile was prolonged.

4.3.2 Changing the Guard

Drandua inherited an ad-hoc and unaccountable system of Diocesan management, one in which the bishop oversaw everything from confirmations to tax returns. The late Bishop Tarantino had presided over a growing Diocese in which there were more Italian priests than Ugandan, and each of the former generated his own funding base while the Ugandan priests depended on Italian patronage, or paltry diocesan funding¹⁶. In 1989, Drandua called the first Synod for Arua Diocese, in which the 'major players' and the lay communities participated. As a result of this, an explicit commitment to empowering the lay Christians of the diocese was expressed, and the Acts of this Synod mark the concretization of the hope engendered when the leadership of the diocese passed into Drandua's hands. The new diocesan structure (see Figure 4.1) reveals the thorough process of consultation and empowerment envisioned from the chapels through to the Bishop's house.

The initiatives and structures put in place reflected the theological and political influences from other parts of Africa and the developing world. Inculturation became a major element of liturgical and pastoral change, and the 'sense' of the Synod was of a 'Changing of the Guard'. For this change to be complete, it will take some time for the Europeans and foreigners to be replaced by Ugandans¹⁷. Inculturation is therefore rather cosmetic yet,

¹⁶In 1975, only 10 of the Diocese's priests were Ugandan or from West Nile ; by 1993, 65 local priests served in the diocese (a significant number were also overseas), representing 71% of the Diocesan male clergy.

¹⁷In 1993, when a consultation process on the draft documents for the second Synod of 1994 was being carried out throughout the diocese, discussions were held in English to facilitate Italian and American representatives on the Consultation team.

and withdrawal of foreign influence from the parishes seems to have taken place in the manner Taylor described (1958), where missionaries leave the parishes to take up senior administrative posts in the diocese.

4.3.3 Establishing Accountability

The Chancellor of the diocese has said:

“Everybody is talking about inculturation, but this is not our main problem. Our main problem is accountability and being honest” (Worhl, tape 18, June 1994).

He highlights the very issue which I conceptualise as framing the imagined spaces of mission people, and one which can be interpreted in several ways. The exercise of accountability in Catholic dioceses of Africa is technically no different than in other dioceses elsewhere in the world, but the terms of accountability are informed by local ‘cultural’ and ‘development’ dimensions that are often particular to Africa, and in this case unique to West Nile.

In communal diocesan discourse, the term ‘accountability’ immediately refers to the business of checks and balances, accounting for funding and spending, and generally ‘doing accounts’. This is the dominant meaning, which intersects at various levels in the individual imagined spaces of mission people with other terms of accountability – cultural, sexual and personal, and as such, less explicitly expressed. At this stage, I principally refer to the dominant discourse.

4.3.3.a Financial

The issue of accountability has cursed newly independent African states struggling to establish reputations for sound management. So it is for ‘newly independent’ Catholic Dioceses in Africa. Whereas in the past, monies came and went, raised and spent under the paternalistic eye of European bishops managing largely European funds, the demand for accountability to donors and to Rome increased when African bishops took

charge of their own diocese.

In Tarantino's time, no accounts were kept at Diocesan level, and no record exists of the flows of finance in the years since 1958, when the Diocese was created. Diocesan finance was handled entirely by the Procure accounts of the Verona Fathers (Comboni Fathers¹⁸). In London, Kampala, Mombassa, Rome and Arua, monies for Arua Diocese were donated and spent, transacted as though in an international bank¹⁹. By 1994, Arua Procure was still handling the bulk of diocesan funds, although the Combonis were speculating that the service might be wound down in Arua, as the area stabilised and other retail and banking facilities became available for local parishes. However, with only 11.9% of diocesan funding being self-generated (1993), the demand remains for an international financial handling facility to process the 88.1% of diocesan funds that are externally sourced²⁰(see Figure 4.2). At a local level, the diocese is a major stakeholder in the recently established 'Centennial Bank' which aims to provide local individuals and businesses with credit.

In 1991, Bishop Drandua appointed a young Madi priest, Fr Gracian Waigo, to the newly created post of Financial Administrator of the diocese. Fr. Waigo had recently returned from postgraduate theological studies in Spain, and he admits:

"What training had I for this job? (Laughs)" (Waigo, Tape 5, July 1994)

Locally, Waigo is admired for his urbane intelligence and proven honesty, and is considered appropriate for the post because of his character rather than his skills.

As a diocesan hospital administrator commented approvingly:

¹⁸The Verona Fathers changed their name to Comboni Fathers/Sisters gradually after Vatican II, so that they would be associated with their founder rather than the European town from which he came.

¹⁹General banking at this level was inefficient and sometimes insecure in Uganda and so the missionaries continued to use their procurement system even after a national bank was established.

²⁰'Interservice' is such a facility in Kampala, established by the White Fathers (the first Catholic missionaries in Uganda, French in origin) and now run by the Episcopal conference of Ugandan bishops. It handles transfers of money, imports of goods, payment of levies and taxes; dealing especially with catholic diocese, congregations and aid agencies.

“That boy can learn it! He is bright!” (Fieldnotes, March 1994)

That the post should be given to an ordained priest was taken for granted²¹.

Waigo was plunged into an accounting nightmare in which inadequate records for expenditure of monies in half a dozen currencies formed the basis of the detailed information he was now obliged to furnish ‘Propaganda Fide’ with in Rome. It seemed as if once the infantilization of Africans by Europeans had finally passed, and the paternalistic ties with Italy had been broken with Tarantino’s death, they were replaced with bureaucratic ties of accountability created in response to the inadequate records of the past. Indeed, the fact that Waigo inherited such an absence of accountability is as telling as the accounts he has struggled to present.

4.3.3.b Sexual

That priests are celibate and chaste is an expectation and condition of the catholic priesthood which takes little account of the cultural expectations and conditions of their backgrounds and ministry. Priests in Arua diocese often have ‘girlfriends’ or ‘wives’ or ‘friends’²². Where they exist, the range of these relationships is considerable²³. While many priests adhere to their vows, others may have one brief relationship throughout their entire ministry, others may conduct longterm monogamous relationships, while others again engage in innumerable sexual encounters. Any of these relationships may result in pregnancy and children.

The ‘accountability’ involved in these relationships and their consequences operates at a different level than the financial ‘accounting’ of the diocese, yet I would argue that they are not entirely un-connected. As celibate men, priests should have their imagined spaces defined by their religious vows

²¹The European-based missionary assumption that a celibate priest will be able to devote his time and energies to such a post without temptation or distraction is revealed as unrealistic in this context. In Arua, a priest’s family often expects support from the son for whom they sacrificed much, in order to educate. Also, many priests have ‘hidden’ wives and children to support.

²² All of these terms denote a sexual relationship.

²³ Green (1993), Stirrat (1992) and Christian (1984) discuss the implications of the vow of celibacy (and whether it is met) for Christian communities served by priests.

and by the 'honesty' expected of them as they manage develop monies. Both of these terms of accountability are explicitly expressed in the public domain of communal discourse. As sexual men, leading lives that include responsibilities to women and even children, Catholic priests in West Nile operate within further terms of accountability which are implicit and concealed, and which may compromise and conflict with their explicit codes of accountability. Missionary priests do so within their cultural boundaries, while lugbara priests refer more closely to local cultural codes which frame 'family' life for the lugbara. As sexual men, priests thus contest the boundaries of their imagined spaces.

4.3.4 Taking Account

This section examines some aspects of the accounts of Arua diocese, to illustrate how the missionaries bequeathed a material legacy which is proving difficult to quantify, let alone maintain, to indicate just how deep the dependency on external funding is in the Diocese, and to reveal how the insecurity and chaos of the recent past continues to influence management of diocesan funds today.

The accounts for 1993 reveal the financial situation of the Diocese alongside some of the difficulties in applying this format of accounting across every missionary territory in the Catholic world. Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 present the income and expenditure accounts of the Diocese for 1993, as far as was possible. On Table 4.3, there are no entries for the 'Patrimonial Estate' of the diocese, referring to the properties the diocese owns. Throughout the deaneries, parishes, zones and chapels of the diocese are materials and equipment 'belonging' to the diocese. These generators, tractors, solar panels, furnishings, houses and halls are in various conditions, legacies of missionaries' generosity and control. Taking an inventory of these properties is an immense task for any diocese, let alone one with so few priests, untrained in such tasks and very probably uncertain, after years of disruption and dislocation, of who owns what. In

1993, Waigo embarked on a training programme to instruct chapel committees in this task, but did not anticipate results in the near future. As yet, the entries in this section of the accounts are only for the diocesan bank accounts, which will not hold the monies of individual Comboni priests and brothers who operate their funds independently.

In section IIB (1) of Table 4.3, the first 'Foreign Contribution' listed is the money allocated to each Diocese from Propaganda Fide for the running costs of the Diocese. In 1993 it was \$39,000. This is the only sum that the Diocese can rely upon to meet its running costs (which it doesn't). This is barely 10% of the total Diocesan expenditure. The remaining monies come from a variety of external sources, but are generally grant-based, and not fixed. In Table 4.4, it is clear that Diocesan running costs far exceed the 'Ordinary Subsidy' from Rome, and that local contributions to diocesan income barely met the personnel costs of the diocese.

Hidden realities in the accounts are legion. For example, in Table 4.4, Section III (2), 'Bishop's Pastoral Activities' amount to \$1,969. In fact this only represents the petrol costs that the bishop's vehicle ran up on the diocesan Procure account for local trips. The costs of his trips to Kampala and overseas would be many times this amount, but these are costs that the bishop meets himself, from private donations²⁴. In Section III (7) of the same table, 'Transport/new vehicles' represents the taxes paid to acquire one new vehicle - the enormous cost of the vehicle itself (perhaps 25 million ush) is hidden elsewhere. In Section III (7) again, the Diocese is expected to make contributions to 'funds of Holy See' - to collect money from the Christians of each chapel in Arua Diocese to send to Rome for its pontifical missions. It seems absurd that the poorest Christians in the world should be asked for cash for this purpose and as Waigo remarked "That one is tricky to get". This entry is left blank.

²⁴ This information was supplied in confidence from a member of the Diocesan administration who discussed the accounts with me in August 1994. He implied that the administration (including the bishop) viewed this reporting of the situation as an interim measure, while the more pressing issues of

Figure 4.3 illustrates how the majority of diocesan expenditure is in 'works', building, expanding, renovating the institutional infrastructure of the diocese. Both income and expenditure were less in 1993 than in 1992 (Figure 4.4). In 1993, there was a credit balance of \$112, 971, but as a Diocesan administrator explained, this is likely to be monies already designated for another stage of a pastoral or development project.

Table 4.5 , detailing diocesan income for 1993 (expenditure not available) gives some indication of the complexity of managing the finances for an organisation like Arua Diocese. Not only are some of the categories, defined in Rome, inappropriate for a diocese with the recent history of Arua, but its continued dependence on foreign support is evinced in the fact that its accounts are presented in 5 currencies (Sterling, US Dollars, Swiss Franc, Italian Lire and Ugandan shilling)²⁵.

4.3.5 Diocesan Development

The largest proportion of income and expenditure is in 'Development Projects', although in reality, the categories of these accounts are interdependent, since the diocesan pastoral and development institutions often apply to the same overseas donor for funding.

Initially it was principally projects for refugee resettlement and rehabilitation on which the diocese co-operated with UNHCR and the International Red Cross, under the auspices of the government's 'Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation' plan, but its own 'development' agenda consequently emerged as a response to the needs of the Christians (and others) in the region. Foreign missionaries returned to their home parishes in Europe to raise funds to rebuild churches, re-establish schools and feed and administer to the medical needs of returnees. On an ad-hoc

accountability were still being met.

²⁵That it is a young theologian, taking crash courses in spreadsheet operation from a European volunteer whose laptop computer works when the generator is on, makes the detail of the accounts all

and individual basis, missionaries attended to the immediate needs of those around them. Italian missionaries then began to approach Italian aid agencies for further support - particularly those based in Verona, home of the Combonis. As a result, ACAV and CUAMM invested funds and personnel in West Nile, working through the Diocese, and establishing a veritable 'Italian Connection'²⁶.

At the height of the disturbances, a team of 'German Emergency Doctors' were posted to the governmental hospital in Yumbe. When this contract ended, one of them wished to remain in the region and returned as a volunteer for 'Misereor' - the German Catholic aid agency. With co-operation between the agency and the diocese thus established, Misereor quickly became a very major donor, allocating 950,000 DM (\$600,000) in 1987 for healthcare projects in the region, with 500,000 spent on rebuilding Nypea hospital alone. Misereor's support is integral to the diocesan 'Five Years, Arua Diocese Recovery Development Plan' (implemented in 1992), whose goal is to "improve the quality of life of the people" (ADRDP, 1992 :3), through the implementation of eighteen objectives covering many aspects of socio-economic life. In 1993, Misereor's contributions to the Diocese amounted to over 50% of the diocese's external funding, with nineteen projects running concurrently, 9 applications being considered, and with three German volunteers working for the diocese, funded by Misereor. So pervasive is their influence in the diocese that when I asked a senior figure in the diocesan administration for their address in Germany, he laughed and replied :

the more remarkable.

²⁶ ACAV (Associazione Centro Aiuti Volontari) is the International Group for Technological Co-operation with Developing Countries, an Italian NGO based in Trento, Italy. Their general project manager in 1994 described the organisation as 'definitely religious in character', although since 1990 it has been implementing a project financed entirely by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to locate, secure and provide drinking and domestic water throughout West Nile. Its initial connection with the Catholic Diocese and experience in the region would have increased its chances of securing this project.

CUAMM (Collegio Universitario Aspirante Medici Missionari) is a voluntary NGO based in Padova, Italy. It was established in 1950, and explicitly states in its statutes that it seeks to work in line with 'gospel values'. In 1994 it had 1046 volunteers employed in 33 countries in Africa, Asia and South America, while supporting the training of over 250 overseas medical personnel in Italy.

“But surely you know it ! Everyone does ! If even you stop a street boy there in Arua by Gaba market, he can tell you “Mozartstrasse 9!” (Fieldnotes, July 1994).

The range of ‘development’ activities that the Diocese engages in is considerable, ranging from agricultural extension work, leadership training, youth work, women’s tailoring courses, fish-ponds, Primary Healthcare projects, small income generating projects and skills training. The list of Misereor’s current projects for the end of 1993 illustrates the range of the projects they support (Figure 4.5). Agencies from Europe operate projects in the area supporting the five year plan²⁷. I will now concentrate on the three main areas that my fieldwork focused upon, and for ‘Education’, ‘Health’ and ‘Women’, assess the situation in West Nile generally, and the part that Arua Diocese plays in development in these sectors.

4.3.5.a Women’s Development

The NRM government has claimed to take account of those groups marginalised by previous administrations and policies, and has specified ‘women’ and the ‘youth’ as pivotal to the development of an equitable Ugandan society. Balancing power in a nation with such a violent history for tribal strife, Yoweri Museveni, the Prime Minister, is seeking solidarities across ethnic divisions. Just as ‘Women’ and ‘Gender’ have become ‘buzzwords’ in theology, critical theory and development since the late 1960s, so the Catholic women of Arua Diocese have organised into various committees and groups, and indeed it has been the diocesan women’s’ programme that has nurtured some of the regions’ women representatives voted onto the Constituent Assembly in 1994.

²⁷Principal donor agencies working with the Diocese in 1993 were Misereor (Missio in Germany), Cebemo (Missio in Belgium), CUAMM (Italy), ACAV (Italy), SCIAF (The Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund, the official agency for overseas aid in emergency and development projects of the Catholic Church in Scotland), AMA (Advieskommissie Missionaire Aktiviteiten, Missio in Austria), MIVA (an international group of Catholic agencies which particularly support or provide the transportation needs of pastoral workers in the Third World), Church in Need, EZE (Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe, in Germany) and VMM (an agency based in the UK, USA and Ireland which sends skilled Christian volunteers to Catholic Diocese in Africa).

Uganda and West Nile have been part of this global conscientization of women's issues. The present government, headed by Museveni, has identified women's votes as crucial to its delicate balance of power, and so has made special politically favourable provision for women since coming to power. The RC system of local government stipulates that each committee of each council must have a woman as its Secretary of Women's Affairs. In 1988, a Ministerial portfolio for Women was created, which evolved into 'The Ministry of Women, Culture and Youth', which in 1992 was amended again to become the 'Ministry of Gender and Community Development'.

In the 1994 elections for a Constitutional Assembly (CA) to decide the country's political future, specially elected seats were designated for Women's representatives. 51 of the 284 CA members were women, representing 17% of the assembly (Matembe 1995). The women represented in the CA established a 'Gender Information Office', and created a lobbying group called the 'Gender Dialogue', which has pursued several issues including the inclusion of gender neutral language in the new national constitution (Matembe 1995a). More importantly, the principle of equality between men and women was explicitly stated in the constitution which also introduced the 'Equal Opportunity Commission' to the constitution. Customs and cultures which are injurious to women, undermining their dignity and well-being are outlined in the constitution, while equal rights at marriage, during marriage and after divorce were guaranteed. Matembe (1995a) notes that while these changes are undoubtedly encouraging for Ugandan women, the constitutional provisions still need to be translated into civil and criminal law.

With one of the highest African rates of women's participation in national politics (13% of MPs are female), several prominent mainstream politicians are women²⁸, and the leader of the most infamous northern Guerrilla group notoriously a woman, Alice Lakwena. March 8th is celebrated annually as

²⁸ Notably Dr. Speciosa Wandira Zazibwe, vice-President of Uganda and Minister of Gender and

National Women's Day, while the words of the separate women's national anthem places great emphasis on the responsibility that the women of the nation bear for its survival and success:

"Mothers, Daughters! All women everywhere, Stand up and embrace your roles today", "We are the mothers of the nation, Uganda," and "We wake up, wake up, wake up at the break of day, To feed this baby with our brains".

This sense of female custodianship of the nation's future is also evoked in the proverb recited by every women's group and committee I encountered :

“Educate a son, and you will make him great.

Educate a daughter, and you will make the nation great”.

So, the public rhetoric of the modern, independent Uganda is promoting a positive image of Ugandan women, albeit still within fairly traditional role guidelines.

The Catholic Diocese of Arua has a separate 'Women's Desk', established in May 1994, to co-ordinate the activities, training and projects of women's groups in the Diocese. Its first co-ordinator was a Sacred Heart sister who held the post for a year. The women's groups started in the 1980s during the era of reconstruction, and now every parish has a network of women's groups located at particular chapels, working on small income-generating schemes and running courses in leadership training. The exact number of groups was never ascertained, even by the woman who chaired the co-ordinating body (the Catholic Women's Association of Arua Diocese) from 1992 to 1995²⁹. The women's group at Boraja was established in 1988, and has been supported by SCIAF, Cebemo and Trocaire³⁰. It has clubs established at many of the chapels in the parish, and at the PLC in Boraja, there are two small buildings owned by the group, one as a store and meeting room, the other as its new tailoring school, opened in May 1994.

Community Development.

²⁹ Personal correspondence with Lilli Kareo, January 1998

³⁰ Trocaire is an Irish Aid agency (meaning 'mercy') in the Caritas group.

4.3.5.b Education

In the 'Districts Speak Out' survey (1993)³¹, 'inadequate education' and 'illiteracy' were cited among the leading problems for women, children and adolescents in Uganda, key factors in determining their wellbeing.

Participants identified three main barriers to education - high costs, rural/urban imbalances and cultural attitudes about gender. These constraints operate particularly to exclude girls and rural children from education³² (Kakande and Nalwadda 1993), but there are government proposals in place to address the problems and issues that result in this³³. Lack of schooling for children results in low literacy among the general population - particularly for women and rural dwellers. Female literacy is an important determinant of health and well being for infants and children (MoH/Macrosystems, UDHS 1988/89) since the more formal education a mother has completed, the lower the infant and under 5s mortality rates.

Table 4.6 illustrates the basic educational indicators for Uganda and West Nile, elaborating on the figures provided in Table 4.1. In Uganda, 54% of people are literate; the rates in West Nile's districts are lower than this, with Arua having 46% of its population literate. Only 28% of Arua women can read, compared to 45% of Ugandan women, although an equal 65% of Ugandan and Arua district men are literate. In rural areas, many teachers are untrained, and Arua's 45% and Nebbi's 62% of untrained teachers compares unfavourably with the national rate, while there are more pupils

³¹This participatory national assessment survey of the situation for Uganda's women and children was conducted for the Ugandan National Programme for Children in 1993, as the basis of the 1994 report for the Government of Uganda and Uganda National Council for Children entitled 'Equity and Vulnerability' (see Barton and Wamai 1994).

³²The basic education system in Uganda is based on 7 years at primary school and 6 years at Secondary school, with examinations taken at the end of P7 (the Primary Leaving Examination) to select students for Secondary school, where 'O' levels are taken after S4, and 'A' levels after S6, in examinations based on the British Cambridge Examination Board. Sending girls to school not only costs the family her fees, but they lose her domestic labour and income-generating capacity, while there is no assurance that the money spent on her education will ever be 'remunerated', especially if she marries young and has children. Children in rural areas almost always have to board at secondary school some distance from their homes, incurring extra expense for their families, and removing any chance of then contributing to household duties in the evenings and weekends.

³³The MoES White Paper (1992) recommended that in order to work towards gender equality in education, better facilities should be provided for female students in post-primary institutions, and that there should be accelerated registration and training of female teachers, tutors and lecturers.

per trained teacher in West Nile (Arua 56, Nebbi 73) than nationally(49). Despite the fact that it has higher than average numbers of pupils per trained teacher and 45% of its teaching body untrained, Arua district pupils perform remarkably well in its Primary Leaving Examination (PLE), where there is an 85% pass rate, the 6th highest of 39 districts nationally.

Uganda's national record of educating girls is among the most encouraging of African nations, enrolling over 75% as many females as males (UNICEF, State of the World's Children 1994). However, in its rural areas, this rate declines to the national rates of the poorest performing countries in this category, like Somalia, Chad and Guinea. 58% of Arua children do not attend a school (similar to Moyo and Nebbi), 66% of girls and 51% of boys, which is higher than the national rate.

Practical problems make completing a primary and secondary education difficult for West Nile children. Books are scarce³⁴, schools are far from home, and fees are relatively high³⁵. Farming families with little cash educate boys before girls, since the girl will eventually 'belong' to another clann, and in the meantime, she has more domestic duties to attend to (Kwesiga, 1993). Drop out rates throughout a school career are high, particularly for girls³⁶, and for groups such as disabled or orphaned children, chances of a full formal education are slim.

³⁴A school operating without government support in West Nile faces costs of 12,000ush per mathematics text book, where students pay termly fees of 40,000ush to cover all their costs (accommodation, teaching salaries, food etc). At Boraja Domestic Science Institute in 1992, the library, which had been ransacked of all texts in the Disturbances was stocked with pre-independence texts, or inappropriate American texts which had been donated to the school. There were 8 mathematics books to share among 100 students undertaking a 4 year course. Even had funds been available to purchase books, the cost of travelling to Kampala (where texts were twice the price than in Nairobi) made the endeavour even more costly.

³⁵Fees per term for secondary schools in the region varied from 40,000ush to 80,000ush (before examination fees) per student. The average income of a primary teacher in the region was 21,000ush and a headteacher 42,000ush. The cost of educating several children of secondary school age was very high for most families, and those families with irregular cash incomes often could not consider education at this level for their children.

³⁶Barton and Wamai (1994) discuss reasons for students dropping out of school (81-82), emphasising the cost of fees, conditions of political insecurity and the need for students to contribute to household tasks and income-generation at home as major reasons.

Against this background, Arua Diocese participates in the education programme of West Nile. Map 4 illustrates the range and locations of diocesan education facilities which, compared to the number of post-primary facilities run by the Ministry of Education and Science (see Map 5) may not seem very significant. However, the diocesan institutions attend to specific educational needs, and many were established to provide for the church's own demands.

The Diocesan 5 year development plan (ADRDP) highlights three particular goals in the education sector.

“(i) To strengthen the institutional capacity of all Parishes to undertake education and production activities with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of life of the Community by positively influencing their capacity of productivity.

(iii) To assist in increasing primary school enrolment from the present 65-70 to 95% in five years.

(iv) Assist in improving on the performance of pupils in class and extra curriculum activities”(ADRDP 1992 :9).

These are developed further in the context of the diocese mobilising parents in building and opening new academic and vocational training centres, participating in the rehabilitation of existing school structures, upgrading their buildings to be permanent, while also encouraging extra-curricular activities and vocational skills training programmes. The diocesan religious education office also oversees the content of religious instruction taught in diocesan schools, co-ordinates youth groups and organises seminars and courses on social issues. This then is a brief summary of the educational background that Boraja Domestic Science Institute (the focus of Chapter 6) is located within, and where I explore some of the imagined spaces occupied there.

4.3.5.c Health

Table 4.7 presents statistical information on basic health indicators and health service provision in West Nile and in Uganda in 1994. Life expectancy in Uganda is in the low 40s and is among the shortest in Africa and the world³⁷. This is partly attributed to the high incidence of AIDS/HIV which is the leading cause of death among adults, and it underlies the country's main causes of morbidity - malaria, pneumonia, tuberculosis, anaemia and diarrhoea (MoH, Health Planning Unit 1993). For infants and children under 5, Uganda's U5MR of 203 per 1000 ranks them among the most vulnerable children in the world (see Table 4.7). A new-born Ugandan baby has only an 80% probability of reaching the age of 5, while the rates in the districts of West Nile are worse (Arua 230, Moyo 241, Nebbi 234). Maternal mortality is also high, estimated to be at least 600-1000 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in rural areas (Kadama P. 1993, Kasolo 1992). These high rates are associated with risk factors in having babies close together, when mothers are particularly old or young and when the level of maternal education and literacy is low (UDHS 1989/90, Ebanyat 1992). High levels of infant and child mortality encourage some couples to have more children than they ultimately want, in order to achieve their desired number of surviving children (Kayongo-Male and Onyango 1984).

High fertility and low use of family planning make reproductive health issues a major concern for women of childbearing age (Turshen 1991). The total fertility rate³⁸ in Uganda in 1994 was 7.1, among the highest in the world, while the rate of contraceptive use is among the lowest in the world at 5% (MoFEP 1991 Census : UDHS 1988/89)³⁹. A key determinant of fertility is the very high value placed on children in Uganda. Women are esteemed and indeed measured by their reproductive capacities. Infertility is usually regarded as a much more important problem than excess fertility, especially by men (Okurut 1993). Infertility in couples tends to be blamed

³⁷ There are no figures available on life expectancy for West Nile.

³⁸ The number of births in a woman's lifetime

³⁹ The figure is for married women of childbearing age using contraception between 1980 and 1994.

on the women, leading to their stigmatisation and mistreatment.

All of the diseases responsible for the top five causes of death for infants and children are preventable - Malaria (Kadama P.1993), Diarrhoea (Wamai and Barton 1992), Acute Respiratory infections (Kadama 1993), Nutritional disorders and immunisable diseases such as measles and tetanus. With regard to the provision of health services in West Nile, Table 4.7 illustrates that people in West Nile live no further nor nearer to Health Units than the average Ugandan, and its 9 hospitals (see Map 6) (out of 95 nationally) provide the population of West Nile with access to hospital beds that is near the national average. However, only 15 of Uganda's 196 Health Units are in West Nile and the number of doctors serving the area is relatively few : the people of the three districts have longer queues to face than the average Ugandan. Patients usually have to pay to travel to a medical centre, and to pay for consultation and treatment. In rural areas where there is scarce medical provision, inadequate public transport and less 'cash' available, people (especially women) are less likely to seek treatment and attend traditional healers instead (see 'Districts Speak Out' survey 1993 and Quality of Care survey, 1994). Community participation in Primary Health Care takes place at various levels and through a variety of committees, local, district and national⁴⁰. Various studies have shown that community based Primary Health Care programmes that use volunteer health workers result in improved health (Salin 1993, AMREF 1993, Othieno 1991).

Arua Diocese engages in a wide variety of health projects in West Nile. Map 6 illustrates the location of health establishments run by the diocese. Of the region's 9 hospitals, 3 are run by the diocese, who also participate fully in the DMO's schemes for immunisation, training, PHC and health education. Alongside the hospitals are a number of Health Units, Dispensaries and Clinics (see Map 6). These may be fully diocesan run,

⁴⁰ Health Unit Management Committees (HUMCs) are linked to local political structures and the RC3

joint ventures with the DMO or private individuals or run entirely by the government or individuals. It is generally held in the region that the health facilities provided by the Diocesan hospitals and health units is of a superior standard to state services. The diocesan ADRDP specifies 'Primary Health Care' as one of its target areas, concentrating particularly on sanitation, nutrition, maternal and child health care, developing a community-based health care system staffed by volunteer health workers, and, related to population awareness, programmes for women and the agricultural extension service (ADRDP 1992 :9).

The material I have presented on women's development, education and health as it is broadly portrayed in statistics and reports, and how it is structured within the Catholic Diocese of Arua sketches the context for how the institutions in Boraja operate.

4.3.6 The Bishop's Dilemmas

This discussion of the background and Diocesan involvement in the areas of women's development, health and education provide one dimension of the context in which my fieldwork is situated. I will now discuss another dimension of the diocesan role in managing development, by exploring some of the dilemmas that Bishop Drandua faces in balancing the administrative tightrope of tempering expectation and meeting need in a cultural setting which often contests both 'catholic' and 'development' codes of accountability. My discussion is intentionally exploratory, questioning and open-ended (rather like Doornbos' (1995) discussion of similar issues). My aim is to raise these issues as context to my thesis analysis, and to illustrate the complexity of the factors underlying the situation I met in Boraja. The following Diary excerpt describes the bishop's verandah on one of his days for seeing people.

"Went to Arua today with some of the sisters, Jude and Fr. Daniel.
Rosa went yesterday and Sarah wants to go in again tomorrow. We all

Chairperson is also chairperson of the HUMC.

need to see the bishop. Left the sisters etc off at the bishops' house, and came back at 4pm, to collect them, but they were only half-way up the queue. The verandah was full of people waiting to see him, and that Sacred Heart Sister acting like a bouncer. Jude was bending her ear, trying to get in to see the bishop, but they say Drandua won't see him. She comes out from the bishop's room, scowling, nods barely perceptibly to someone in the queue who leaps to their feet and runs to join the smaller queue inside the ante-room. There are ordinary people there too, with all the priests and nuns, all waiting all wanting. We were just delivering that letter, and saw him to say cheerio. He looked exhausted. Offered us tea. Probably relieved that we weren't looking for something. When we left, the sisters gave up, but Fr.Daniel and Jude remained."

(Diary notes, September 6th 1994)

Inheriting a diocese well equipped with generators, machinery and tools generously donated from Italy in the past may at first seem a blessing, but this situation is riddled with difficulties for the incoming administrator who has none of the financial resources of his predecessor. In practical terms, such foreign equipment is expensive to repair and maintain. Spare parts from overseas are many times more expensive than locally produced alternatives, while local personnel often cannot read the instructions provided only in European languages. Also, the piece of equipment has been providing a service or servicing a need in the community, like grinding flour, providing electricity, sterilising needles, turning wood or flushing toilets, that was previously unmet or met by local means. With the 'more efficient' service provided by European technology, local peoples' expectations have risen. Traditional practices have been abandoned and their skills unused. People have grown to expect finer flour, regular electrical light and so on. When such equipment breaks down and awaits repair, there are insufficient local skills to meet the need, and increased dissatisfaction at 'local' efforts to do so. To inherit parishes full of foreign equipment is to inherit parishes full of high material expectation ; expectations which cannot be met by a Ugandan bishop⁴¹.

⁴¹ A similar situation is discussed by Green (1993,1995) of a diocese in Tanzania.

A local priest also described another inheritance from the missionary days. Not only were local Christians now unrealistically and materially demanding of local parish priests, but local priests have absorbed the paternalistic attitudes of their missionary predecessors. After decades of witnessing missionary clergy meet the needs of local Christians (body and soul), now local priests are caught in the position of not being able to meet these material 'body' needs, and feeling inadequate because of this. This priest hoped for a refocusing on the spiritual responsibilities of the parish clergy, and a distancing from expectations to provide material assistance ;

" The missionaries were paternalistic, okay, they can give, give, give. And people take this picture of the priest for themselves to keep up the tradition of "The people need, let me give", instead of saying "Oh, there is poverty here. Let us discuss together how we can move around this situation " (Waigo, Tape 6, July 1994).

A broader implication of this is the type of lifestyles that ordained clergy live. As Doornbos warns "it has encouraged seminarists and African clergy to affect a style of living which is not just exotic, but increasingly antiquated and socially irrelevant" (1995:262). In marked contrast to their Church of Uganda colleagues, Catholic priests do not ride bicycles. As a local man commented "These days they only travel in vehicles" (Fieldnotes, February 1994), and in general, parish priests, serving parishes with up to 30 different chapels, live in the former mission house, with gardens, kitchens, a generator, staff and a vehicle. In their lifestyles, they emulate the Europeans they replace, yet their income from the parish can only meet a fraction of these costs. This situation raises numerous questions. Does the bishop sustain these habits by continuing the conveyorbelt of dependency on overseas funding, to maintain buildings, vehicles and projects that also serve a pastoral or developmental role in the diocese? Or does he call a halt to this unsustainable level of lifestyle, and accept that "in future, African priests will have to content themselves with more modest amenities than were enjoyed by their predecessors" (Doornbos 1995:263)? Does he allow the buildings, gardens and vehicles to slip into misuse and decay? Does he

sacrifice the pastoral and development initiatives that fuel these facilities, does he buy in some bicycles and send his clergy on a bicycle maintenance course ? How can a priest living in comfort deny his quality of life to those in need around him ? With so many parishes, and so many churches, the priest (the only one permitted to consecrate communion, the focal point of Catholic worship) must be able to travel long distances. Perhaps consecrated communion should not be so pivotal to worship ; perhaps others could consecrate bread and wine; perhaps more priests could be ordained if conditions of priesthood altered ? What impact would this have on the Christians and on the clergy? (see Hickey 1980). Stripped of the material advantage that has always been associated with belonging to the Catholic church, can he risk testing the local Christians and clergy ?

Another local priest acknowledges this dilemma, and imagines that this stripping away of artificiality and dependency will in fact serve another purpose too, related to my former point about the responsibilities of clergy , "I have to sacrifice myself, so then I can be in a position to say "No, I have nothing either, I cannot give. Let us work together " (Debo Tape 15, February 1994). By shedding the foreign ties of financial aid, the diocese would need to be self-reliant and development initiatives would be managed by a purely secular organisation, an option viewed favourably by Hastings (1967:155), who feared that "services and witness " would "degenerate into mere management". This vision of change would spell an end to the diocesan reputation for development management; it would place the Catholic diocese on a par with the Church of Uganda, whose development initiatives have always been overshadowed by the Catholic efforts. Funding agencies would no longer have a ready-made network of trained personnel, answering to the bishop, to administer funds and implement projects. It would even place the diocese on even competing terms with the Moslem faithful, who generally only proselytise. These options are unattractive both within and without the diocese, among donors and beneficiaries.

The alternative is to maintain this level of investment in the future of the diocese ; to remain a major player in the regional and national agenda for change and 'progress'. To raise the money to maintain and propel the diocesan development programme further takes money. Every fundraising trip that the bishop makes to Italy, to Germany or to the USA costs the diocese foreign currency that it has precious little of. The bishop has to perform on an international forum, a blend of dignified begging and courteous gratitude. To participate at this level requires administrative and management skills that a Catholic bishop can only draw from instinct and experience, and it is unsurprising that this 'business' side of running a Diocese is often compromised by the other duties of heading the Diocese. As Green comments of a Catholic diocese in Tanzania, "For the church to continue to support its mission-derived infrastructure and the lifestyle of its personnel, it has no option but to function as a business" (1993:31).

Spiritually, the bishop is appointed to provide the Christians and clergy of the diocese with guidance and support in their quest to lead 'the good life'. He has to interpret the 'Word of God', and the doctrine and dogma of the Catholic millennia to these ends. He in the connection between West Nile and Rome. Indeed Drandua was one of the Ugandan representatives at the African Synod in Rome in 1994, and is considered one of the most eloquent and charismatic of African bishops. That he places such emphasis on 'inculturation' as was evident in the 1994 Diocesan synod demonstrates his engagement with the issue of making the church relevant in a changing and challenging Africa. In the day-to-day running of the diocese, he encounters many situations that are particular to West Nile, and that hinge on the cultural differences between 'Rome' and 'Arua'.

With regard to managing the complications that often arise from the commonplace but illicit practice of priests conducting relationships with local women, the bishop must implement various levels of 'accounting'. In

these situations, the bishop is like the head of the 'clan' of his brood of priests, who have been trained and educated at great expense, and whose services are desperately needed in a church which retains the consecrating function of the priests as central to worship . He must look after his priests. He must also look after the women and families who cannot enjoy the material and emotional support of his priests as husbands and fathers. They must be compensated, in material and cultural terms. Yet, how does he care for both groups, while keeping the implications of such relationships hidden from 'Rome' ? How many of the entries under 'expenditure' account for pseudo-brideprices paid to irate families whose daughters were 'impregnated' by local priests ? How many of the local priests sent overseas for specialist training were being 'sent away' from a scandal at home ? *These* accounts will never be discussed or published. This is perhaps, the real challenge of inculturation, this accountability and integral nature of the priesthood, and is the tightrope that the bishop has to walk between his local church and the 'mother' church .

Another dimension of the tension between the expectation of priests and clergy to lead 'chaste' lives and the pressure to access external funding for development projects is presented in the bishop's handling of 'errant' missionaries who work for the diocese. While the bishop is the administrative and spiritual leader of the Ugandan church in West Nile, the foreign missionaries who work within the diocese are also headed by their Provincial in Kampala. It is the Provincial who ultimately determines where a member of the order should be employed. There are several missionary priests and brothers working in the diocese engaged in relationships with women. They attract much attention, but they also attract foreign finance to 'their' projects, for the diocese. The bishop's position is made difficult both by the diocesan continued dependency on overseas funding, and by the Provincial's authority over these missionaries. What is actually a complex and compromising situation for the bishop is often interpreted simplistically by local people and others as 'double-standards'.

These represent only a few of the difficulties facing Drandua. This thesis examines dimensions of this era of transition between missionary and indigenous administration at the intimate level of every day life in a parish that was once a mission station. The issues and exercise of 'accountability' and 'inculturation' emerge repeatedly as areas of conflict and compromise ; sites of dilemma for those engaged in meeting 'development' needs within a Diocesan framework that is both 'lugbara' and 'Catholic'. Chapters 5,6,7 and 8 chart some of the complexities I witnessed within 'development' in Boraja, focused on how women's lives are affected by missionary and secular agendas of change. Before doing so, I will describe Boraja, the place. I do so in a casual and subjective style, to figuratively sketch this mission place for you in the way that you might first encounter it as an Outsider. The use of the term 'you' is to emphasise this informality, and also to draw attention to the positions that we occupy as Outsiders to this place⁴². I sketch this place as an 'Informed Outsider' might do to a stranger/visitor/traveller, from a position of familiarity with the place, but of shared outsider status with you, the new visitor. The description is accompanied by an equally informal sketch map (Map 7).

4.4 An Outsider visits Boraja

Most outsiders first approach Boraja by road from the south ; to enter from the north would be rare, since only refugees and aid-workers fleeing Sudan would choose to leave Sudan via this corner of Uganda. Travelling by vehicle, the mission can be glimpsed, shiny roofed, across a small valley, and then the road dips and turns again .The first sign that there is a sizeable settlement nearby is the 'army barracks' situated at the side of the road, a gathering of green canvas mounds in the eucalyptus trees. Depending on the sense of insecurity at the time, there may be a road block or not, and it is unlikely that the soldiers would stop you anyway, an Outsider. Here and

⁴² Malcolmson (1995) and Law (1997) employ similar techniques of displacing the academic reader to achieve specific dislocating effects, connected to issues of power that they discuss. My intent is less political, and is mainly to informalise the reader's approach to the place.

there are permanent buildings, windowless, roofless, with faded and flaky paint and bullet holes on the walls. Rounding the bend, you find more people walking and cycling on the road, gathering in groups, carrying water, bundles, babies and bags. To your left, a few pastel coloured blocks with their tin 'mubate' roofs are 'Boraja Headquarters', or so the sign says. This is the administrative building, the police station and where the sub-post office, veterinary and bank offices used to be. The buildings are neither modern nor especially well-maintained, but since they are functioning, they look important, and are surrounded by a trim lawn and a thornbush hedge. For the next half a mile, the density of buildings and people increases, there are more new buildings being constructed, more hand-painted signs advertising veranda dispensaries and bars. Behind the trees are clusters of traditional houses, round, mud walled and thatched ; everywhere people walking, shouting, laughing, cycling. A smaller road forks away behind you, you glimpse a busy throng of traders in a woodland copse; it is Tuesday, so there are fresh fish being bargained over. The road now stretches ahead in a straight rise towards the mission. The land stretching to the horizon is a plateau, divided by the steep ridges of the river valleys; it is farmland, the soil is good except where there are outcrops of glittering granite, and on these there is cassava or clothes spread, drying.

Back on the road, piles of sand, home-made bricks and half-built walls mark the optimism in the place ; people are investing in solid and permanent buildings ; they think they might stay this time. The local primary school on the right, which was the original site of the mission, could be doing with the same investment, but you are told that the parents of the pupils cannot collect enough money to replace the shabby thatch with mubate, and that this has to be done before the Board can consider classroom furniture, glass for the windows or more books. Log benches accommodate the children whose 'uniform' usually amounts to a scrap of the royal blue polyester fabric that once was a shirt, ending in patched shorts or skirts; the children's only clothes. The sound of their squealing

play in the grass playing field in front of the school buildings carries up the road to the slight wooded rise to the hospital, which was the original site of the schools that the first missionary Fathers established . Its entrance is formidable, large stone walls holding iron gates, with a sign cemented into the stonework, listing visiting times in three languages, and instructing visitors to leave their weapons outside.

The hospital stretches down to the river, a pretty collection of new and worn buildings. People move through the hospital compound unhurriedly, keeping to paths defined by hedges and colourful flowerbeds. Patients' carers cluster in groups here and there, while the nursing staff in their blue and white uniforms almost sparkle with official cleanliness. It strikes you as a place of quiet order.

Opposite the gates, a few teenage boys have erected tiny tables, where they sell matches, soap, bread and groundnuts. Men gather with their heavy black bicycles here, sometimes gambling, usually smoking and generally passing the time of day in the shade of the large eucalyptus trees. Behind the trees, lies the secondary school, a sprawling collection of buildings and dormitories in various states of repair, decay and construction. Its teachers' housing is considered good, and comprises spacious, well-built traditional houses along the path down towards the school. On this side of the road, there are family compounds constructed quite close together, with little space given to crops. Most of the people here work in the mission institutions, and these homes accommodate the extended families of these employees who are in need of medical care or education. Along the road, on this right hand side, are two long blocks of shop units, but only two or three of these are open at any time. Small, low brick buildings, they have shaded veranda space and local people relax with tea, Pepsi or a 'Nile Special' beer there. Behind these buildings, women industriously brew the local millet beer 'kwete', which is sold warm, in gourds and leisurely drunk through a long thin straw. These retail activities face the mission land across the road.

This is parish land, formerly the mission station, but officially a diocesan parish, St. Joseph's. But people do not think of this place as 'the parish' ; the parish is the entire area of 57 chapels, and this is still the 'mission', despite the best efforts of the local parish priest. The mission started as a camp for instructing converts and recruiting Christians in the 1940s, and became a parish in 1949. The mission land starts at the hospital and stretches from the road to the river on the northern side, and as far east as the end of the Parish Learning Centre.

After passing the hospital, you, an outsider in a vehicle, would not be inclined to turn right to the secondary school or the small shops. There is no wide worn path turning in that direction since vehicles seldom stop there. On the left, past the large sign with "St Joseph's Parish, BORAJA" written in bold letters, there is a broad well-worn turn-off, signalling a road often used by vehicles, which brings you into the mission.

Now, you are facing north towards the border with Sudan, and the mission stretches between the road behind you and the river at the foot of the valley. Commanding the most prominent position in the mission, and indeed in the area, is the parish church next to the road. It is large, italianate, with coloured glass windows, sweeping steps and painted statues on the front. Inside, it is cool and hushed. The walls are painted with African interpretations of the 'Stations of the Cross', and various bible stories depicted in African villages. There are italianate crucifixes, a large ornate altar, local musical instruments and rows and rows of pews and benches. Behind the church, set between it and the quadrangled 'Fathers' Quarters' with its fences, hedges and red tiled roof, is the mission bell. The compound is quiet, the priests are generally indoors, their staff outdoors. The bell is rung before morning mass, around 7am and again, at 1pm (ish).

Behind the church, the Pastoral Training Centre (PTC) occupies some of the land between the church and the hospital; indeed in 1952 this was the site of the original parish church, but by 1954, the larger construction that survives today was deemed necessary. A haphazard collection of classrooms, small dormitories and a kitchen, it is still being constructed, and lacks the classic quadrangle arrangement of the other mission institutions. These students, mature men training as catechists, are generally quiet and there is no bustle around this place. There is a playing field between the PTC and the Fathers' Quarters, where local teams from schools and the hospital play football in the early evenings. Beside the church and lying on the other side of three frangipani trees is another mubate building which houses a parish office and an unused 'Parish Library', intended for the use of local Christians for their on-going formation, but seldom used. Inside, there are fine mahogany shelves and handpainted murals on the walls depicting the bishop and the Italian priest who supervised much of the rebuilding of the parish after the disturbances. In the tableau, he is presenting some books to local Christians, men and women.

There is another broad path sweeping into the back of the Fathers' Quarters, followed by the next building on this side of the mission path, Boraja Domestic Science Institute, or 'Domestic' as it is locally and pejoratively known. Established in 1968 by the parish priest at the time, its buildings frame a central square, and located prominently in the centre is a large attention-drawing stone and plaster grotto depicting the annunciation and a large statue of the Virgin Mary. To the rear of the site are the houses of the Lay Assistants' Association, with a few small teachers house behind these. During termtime, the students are quietly busy at every stage of the day, there is often washing stretched to dry, even around the Virgin Mary, and in the mornings and evenings walk together to boreholes to fetch water for cooking and washing.

Opposite Domestic is Boraja Carpentry and Masonry School and workshops, established by a VMM volunteer in the late 1980s, which trains local men in the skills necessary to rebuild the homes and businesses of the area. It is laid out in blocks, and these are intersected by fine, flaming jacaranda trees. There is usually the noise of banging, sawing and hearty banter between the students here, who get 'on the job training' as they study and work very long days.

One of the little buildings houses the parish generator. It was installed by the dynamic Italian missionary priest who 'rebuilt' Boraja in his 'Boraja is Beautiful' campaign after the disturbances. Once the institutions were renovated, it became clear that their demand for water and power justified the installation of a generator, which was connected to the main mission buildings. When he was here, he ran the generator free of charge, so there was electric light and power to run the pump to provide the mission institutions with some running water. After his departure, his Italian replacement soon realised that the mission could not sustain this level of 'development' on its own, and presented the parish council with a plan for 'self-reliance'. This made him an unpopular figure in the parish, and gilded the reputation of his flamboyant predecessor. The plan involved establishing a parish co-operative to run the generator. All the institutions using power from the generator were to contribute their share towards its running and maintenance. The scheme collapsed within 12 months of its inception, as institutions refused to pay, and relied on others to do so. Those that depended upon the generator (the hospital, principally) ended up running it single-handedly. Finally, the hospital received a grant to buy its own generators, and it now provides the sisters and the volunteers with running water most of the time. The parish generator is only switched on rarely, like when the priests are making communion hosts, or when a film is being screened in the Parish Learning Centre. They are particularly fond of 'Jesus of Nazareth' and 'The Guns of Navarone'.

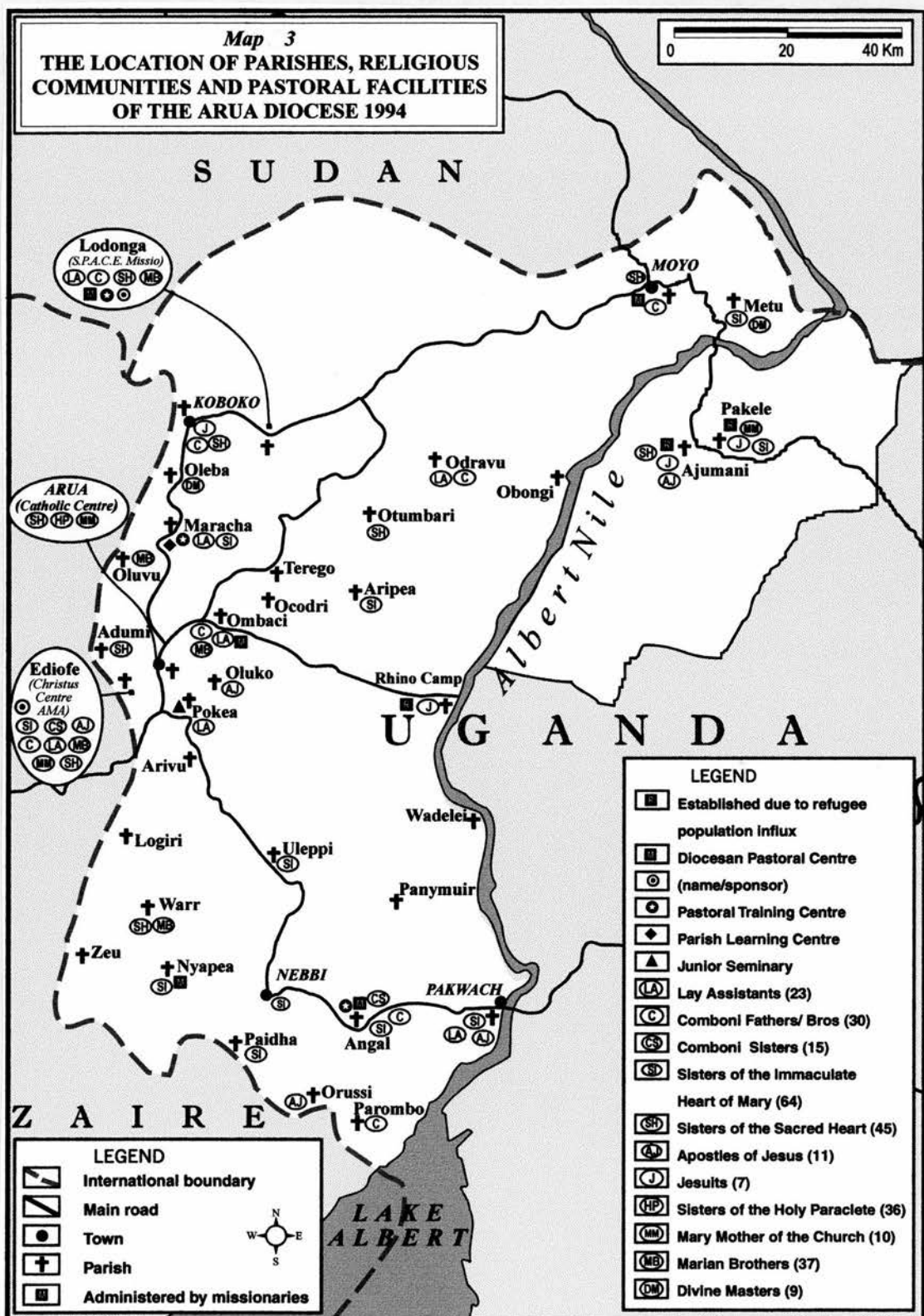
Before the carpentry, the Convent lies in view of the main road, although fenced. Its main building forms three sides of a quadrangle, but it is a more colourful and lush site than the Fathers' Quarters. When the huge trees fell down in the storm of July 1994, the sisters were delighted to claim the timber, and relieved that the buildings escaped unscathed. Vines trail along the pillars of the veranda, there are numerous flower and vegetable gardens, and sections where certain sisters cultivate ducks, coffee or chickens. The sisters glide around the compound in starched blue or white habits, attending to their work, instructing their staff, sitting crocheting and knitting or scolding the numerous children who play in the compound.

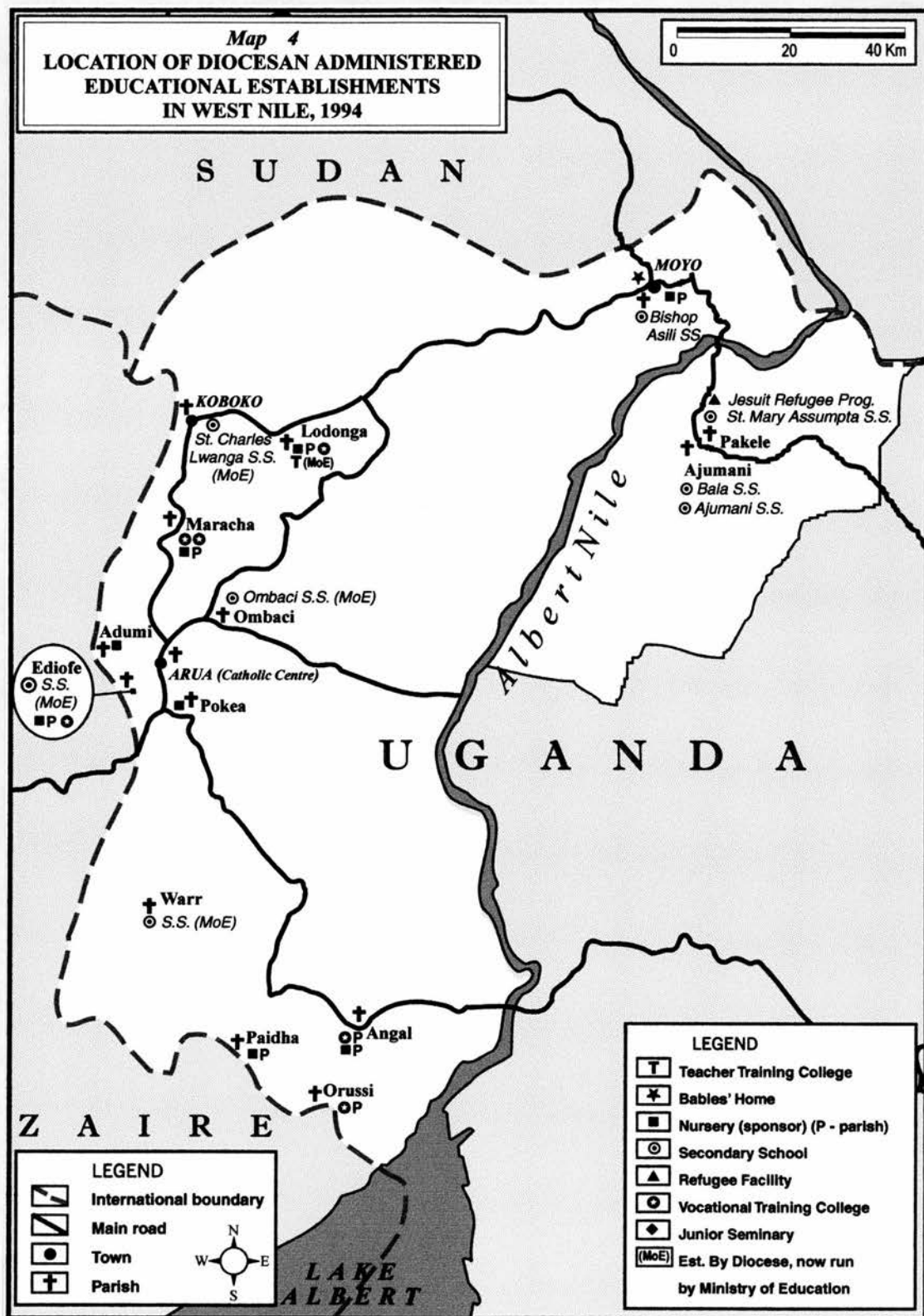
To the northern side of the convent is the volunteers' compound, which has two houses and some outhouses. The main house dates back over 30 years, and was home and dispensary of the woman credited with 'founding' the hospital. This house is a fine square building with red italianate tiles, a wide veranda and pillars. The smaller building was converted from a garage when the American volunteers could not live together in one house. There are six huge teak trees in the compound, the only teak trees in West Nile.

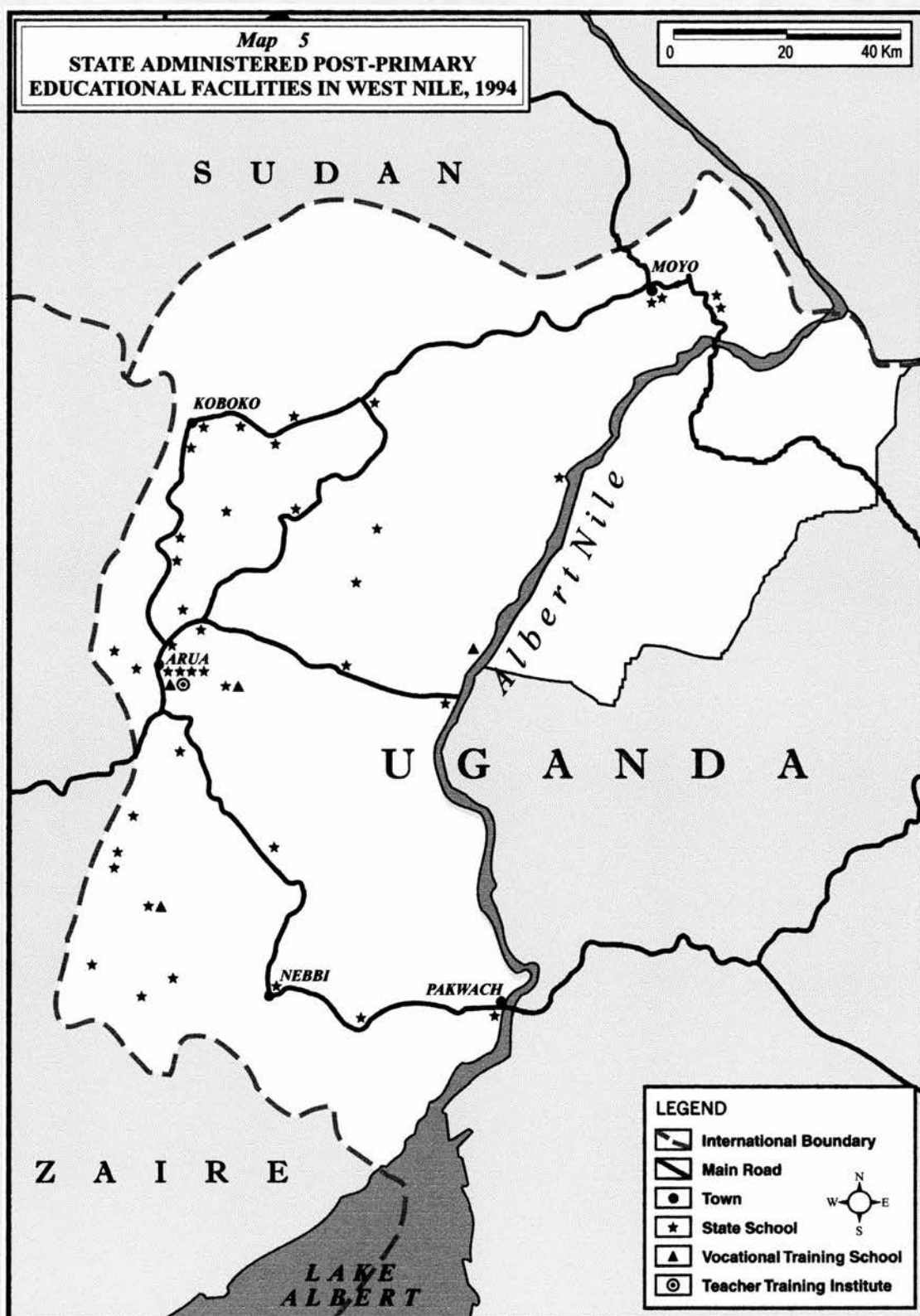
Beyond these buildings, and the last collection of parish buildings on the northern side, is the Parish Learning Centre. Although built by the Italian parish priest in 1988 to serve the needs of the parish, for many years it was the only such meeting centre in the diocese, and it was used for innumerable courses, gatherings and seminars. Since other centres have been built, it is not used so intensively, and seems too large for the needs of its own parish. Its hall, with mural paintings and video projector is well used, but the other blocks with kitchens and dormitories are used less often. Behind the hall are a few traditional thatched houses that the parish built for destitute families and widows who are without family support. The families living here grow food on mission land near the river, and often serve as cleaners in the church and Fathers' Quarters. At the far side of the site, is the tiny nursery school, run by the parish and led by an 'Assistant Helper'.

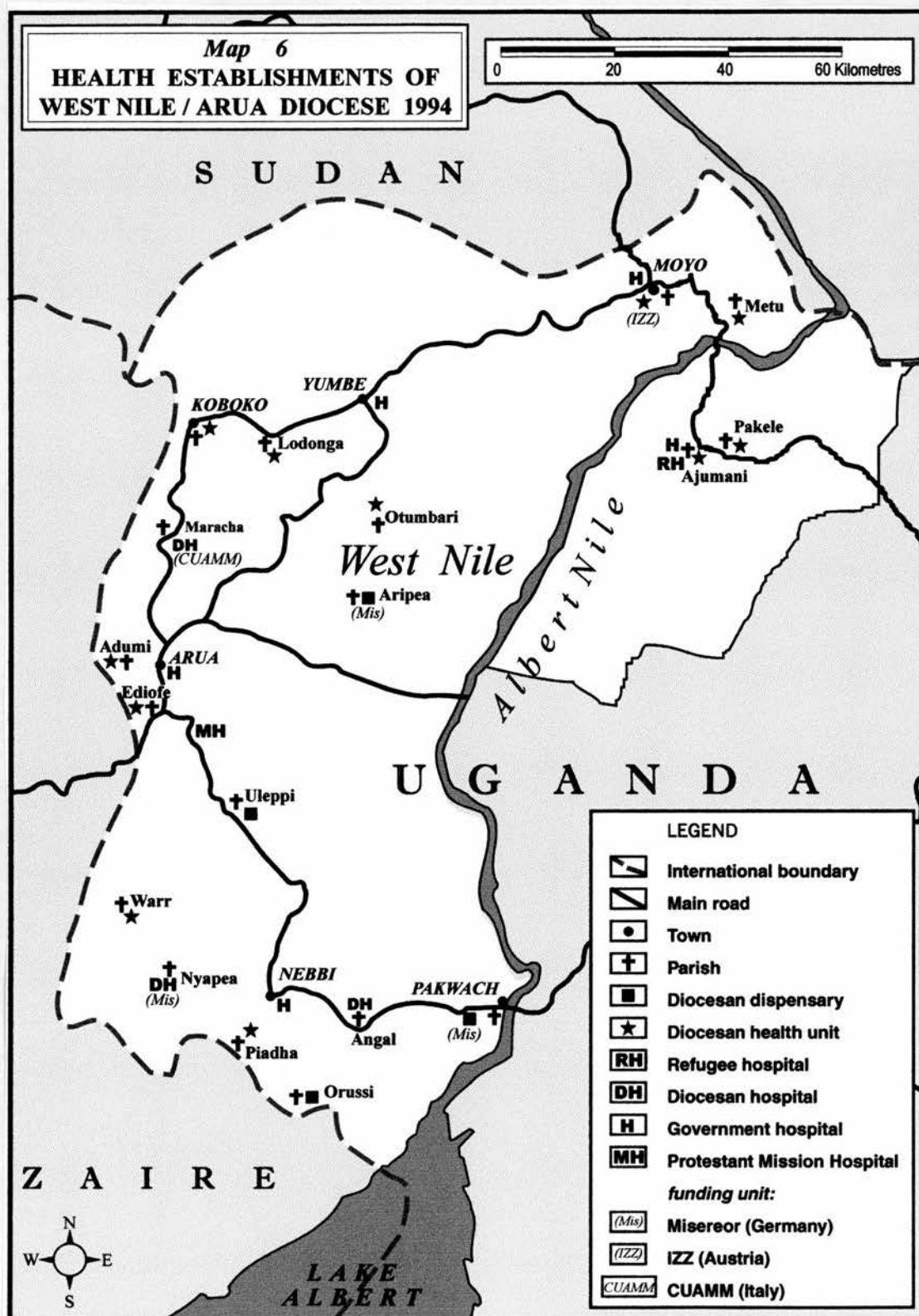
Children of local people earning salaries attend this pre-school institution, and the songs of the children carry far on clear mornings. The most recent addition to the site is the parish women's' group sewing school, which opened in May 1994.

And so you have seen the main places in the mission place of Boraja, old and new, renovated and under-utilised. It is a gentle quiet place, you normally wouldn't stop here unless you had a particular purpose to being here. This is the place as you might see it, a visitor, and outsider. In exploring the functions, experiences and lives of this mission place, I seek to examine the conceptual spaces that exist here.









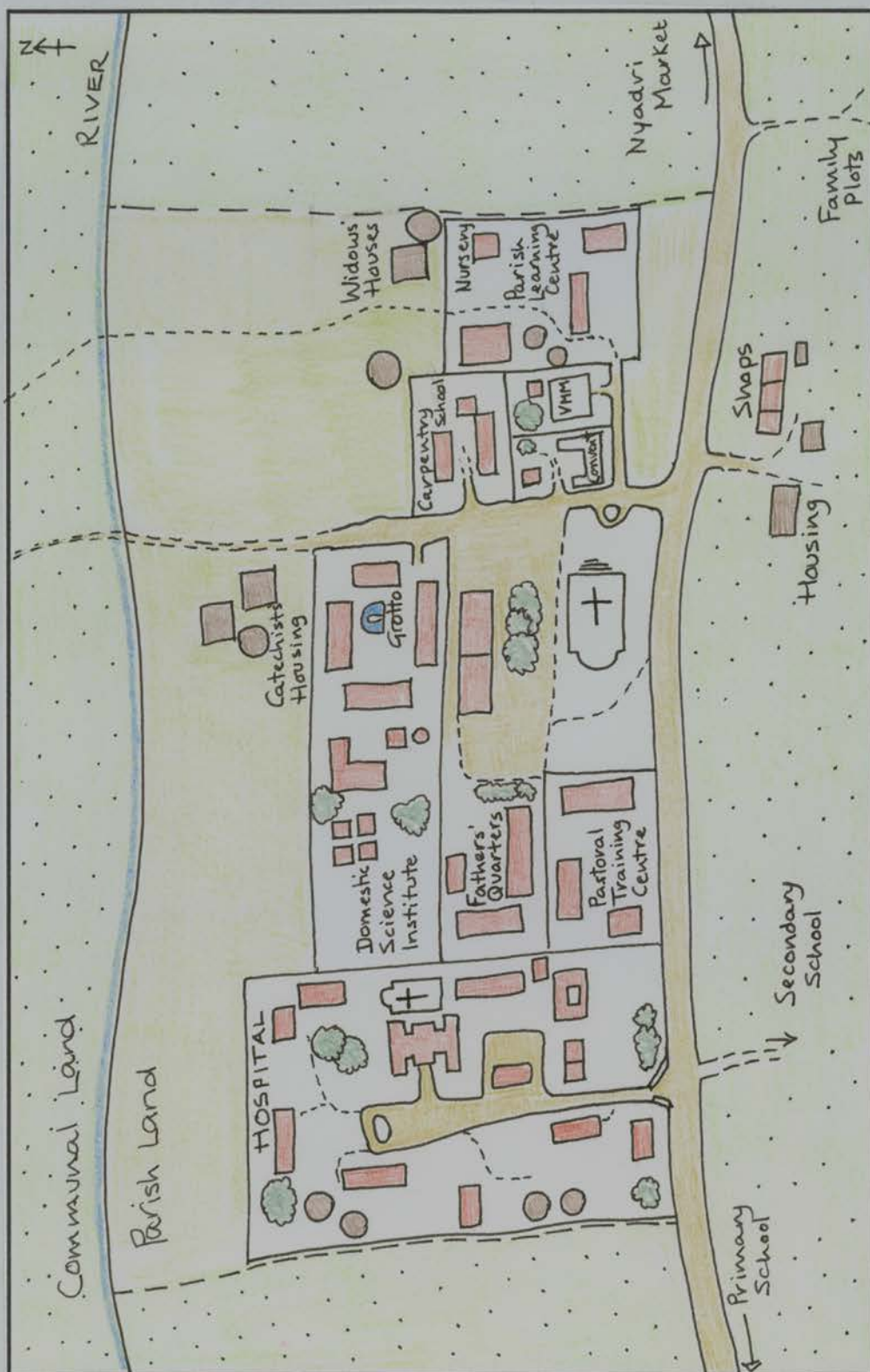


Table 4.1 Basic indicators of well-being for selected African Nations and the districts of West Nile, Uganda, 1994

	UG	BW	CH	KN	TZ	ZA	SU	AR	NB	MY
Infant Mortality Rate	122	45	123	51	111	121	100	137	139	143
Total Fertility Rate	7.3	5.1	5.9	6.3	6.8	6.7	6.1	6.65	6.87	6.77
Adult Literacy as %	56	77	43	74	NA	73	28	46	47	45
Female Literacy as %	35	65	18	59	NA	61	12	28	29	30
Primary Enrolment Ratio F:M	83	105	44	96	98	75	NA	NA	NA	NA
AIDS Cases per million	550	150	4	250	250	350	9	974	1859	165
GNP per Capita	170	2790	220	330	110	230	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: Barton & Wamai (1994) Equity and Vulnerability. A situation Analysis of Women, Adolescents and Children in Uganda. (pp 64,65,69)

Key :

UG = Uganda BW = Botswana CH = Chad KN = Kenya ZA = Zaire SU = Sudan
AR = Arua district NB = Nebbi district MY = Moyo district NA = Not available

Table 4.2 Uganda and the U.K. – some comparisons

Indicator	Uganda	U.K.
Human Development Index – countries ranked by social development	0.326	0.924
Life expectancy at birth (years)	44.7	76.3
GNP per capita , 1993 (\$US)	180	18,060
Demographic growth	2.4	0.3
Average annual growth , 1985 – 1994 (%)	2	1
Average annual inflation 1984 – 1994 (%)	75	5
Energy consumption per capital 1994 (Kgs of oil equivalent)	23	3,754
Children per woman 1992	7.1	1.8
Mortality Rate, under 5, 1994	185	7
Calorie consumption as % of required intake	91	110
Births attended by health personnel 1983 – 1994 (%)	38	100
Access to health services 1990- 1995 (%)	49	100
Access to safe water 1990 – 1995 (%)	34	100
Primary school teachers per student, 1992	35	20
T.V. sets per 100 households	8.3	105
Radio sets per 100 households	85	110
Telephones per 100 households, 1993	0.1	49.4

Source: The World Guide 1997/98, New Internationalist, 1997

Table 4.6 Education Indicators for West Nile and Uganda in 1994

Indicator	Arua	Nebbi	Moyo	Uganda
Total literacy %	46	47	45	54
Female literacy rate %	28	29	30	45
Male literacy rate %	65	67	62	65
Total children out of school %	58	58	55	42
Female children out of school %	66	65	63	44
Male children out of school %	51	51	48	40
Untrained teachers as %	45	62	50	46
Pupils per trained teacher	56	73	44	49
P1 enrolment ratio F/M	68	72	77	86
P7 enrolment ratio F/M	24	32	29	61
1992 PLE passes %	85	74	65	NA

Source: Barton & Wamai (1994)

Table 4.7 Health Indicators and Health Service Provision in West Nile and Uganda 1994

Indicator	Arua	Nebbi	Moyo	Uganda
Infant Mortality Rate	137	139	143	122
Under 5's Mortality Rate	230	234	241	203
Population within 5Km of health unit	48.1	47.3	39.3	49
No. of hospitals	4	3	2	95
No. of health units	8	4	3	196
Population per hospital bed	1,337	782	830	1,197
Population per doctor staff	52,050	39,488	89,250	27,140

Source: Barton & Wamai (1994)

ARUA DIOCESE – CO-OPERATORS WITH THE BISHOP TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF GOD

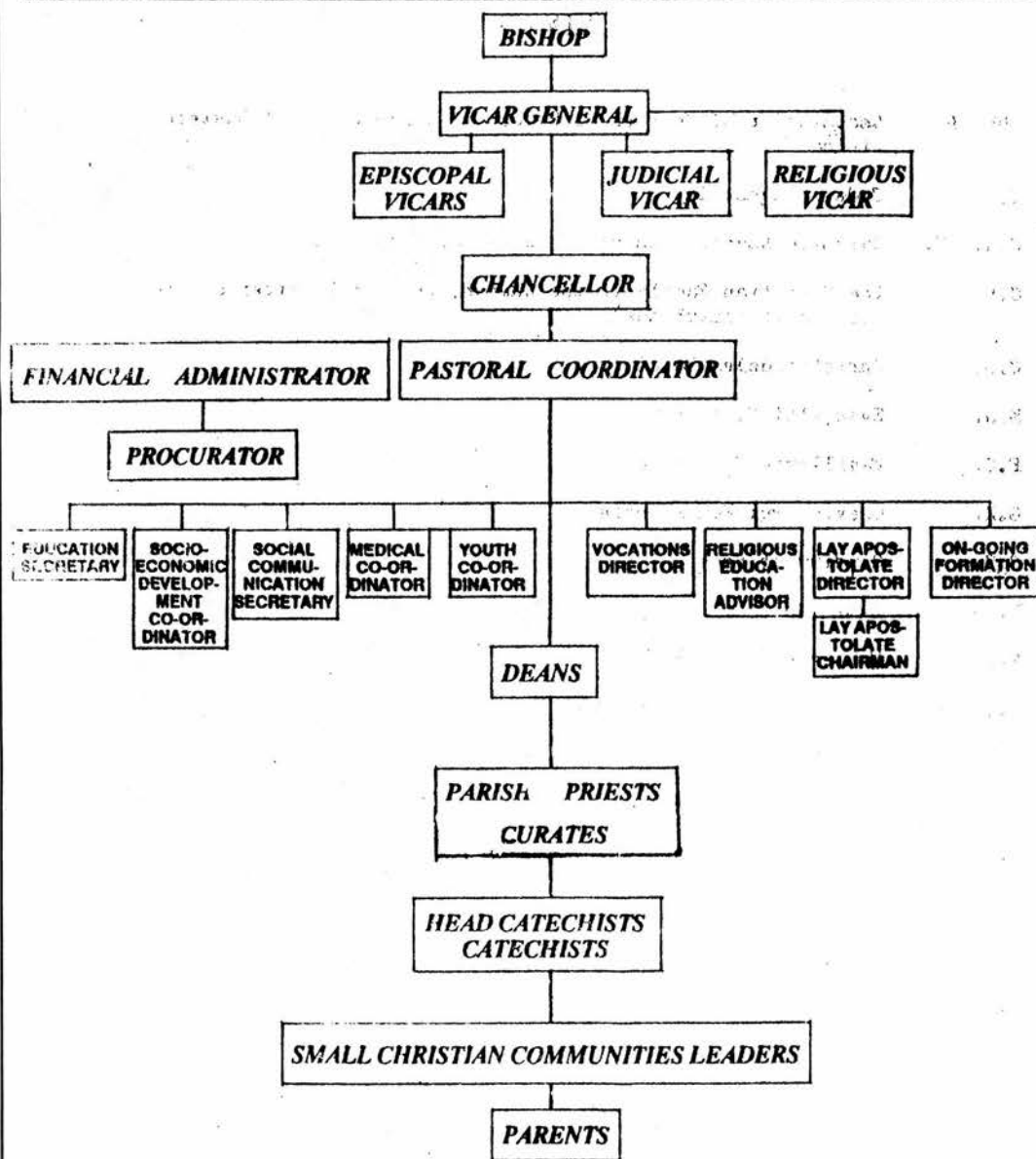


Figure 4.1: New Diocesan Structures for Arua Diocese 1991

Fig. 4.2 Breakdown of Arua Diocese Income 1993

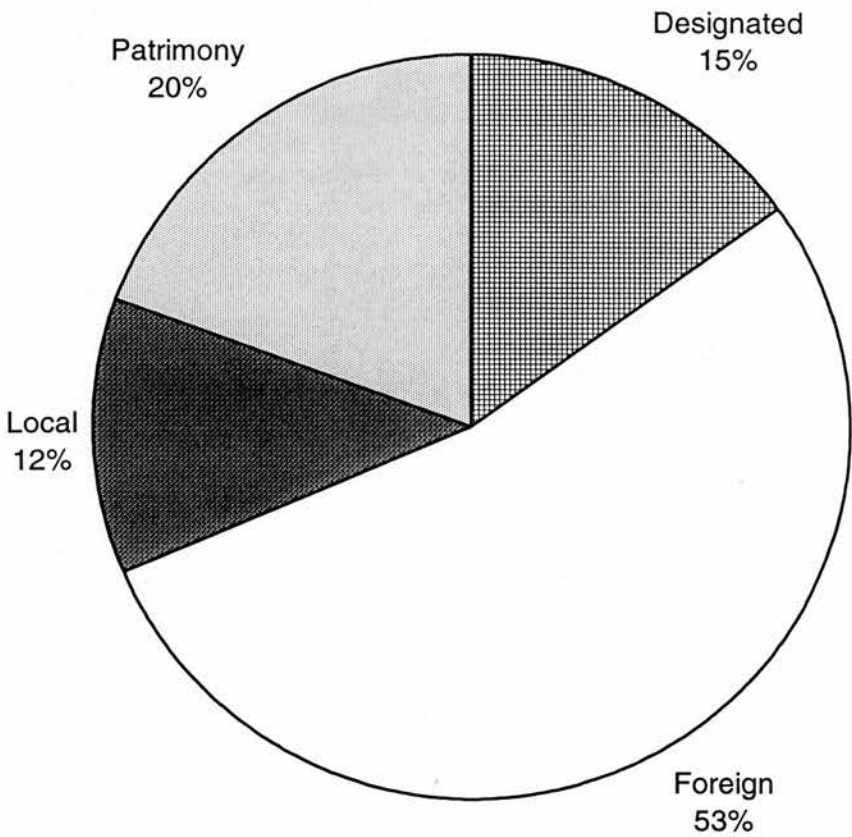


Fig. 4.3 Breakdown of Arua Diocese Expenditure 1993

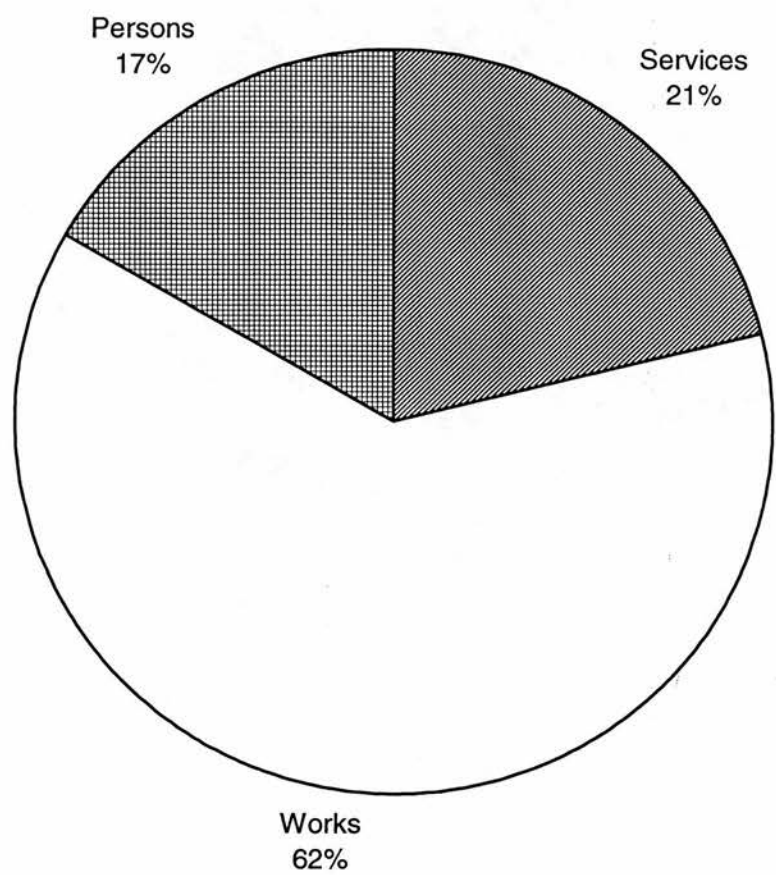


Fig. 4.4 Comparison of Arua Diocesan Income and Expenditure 1992 - 1993

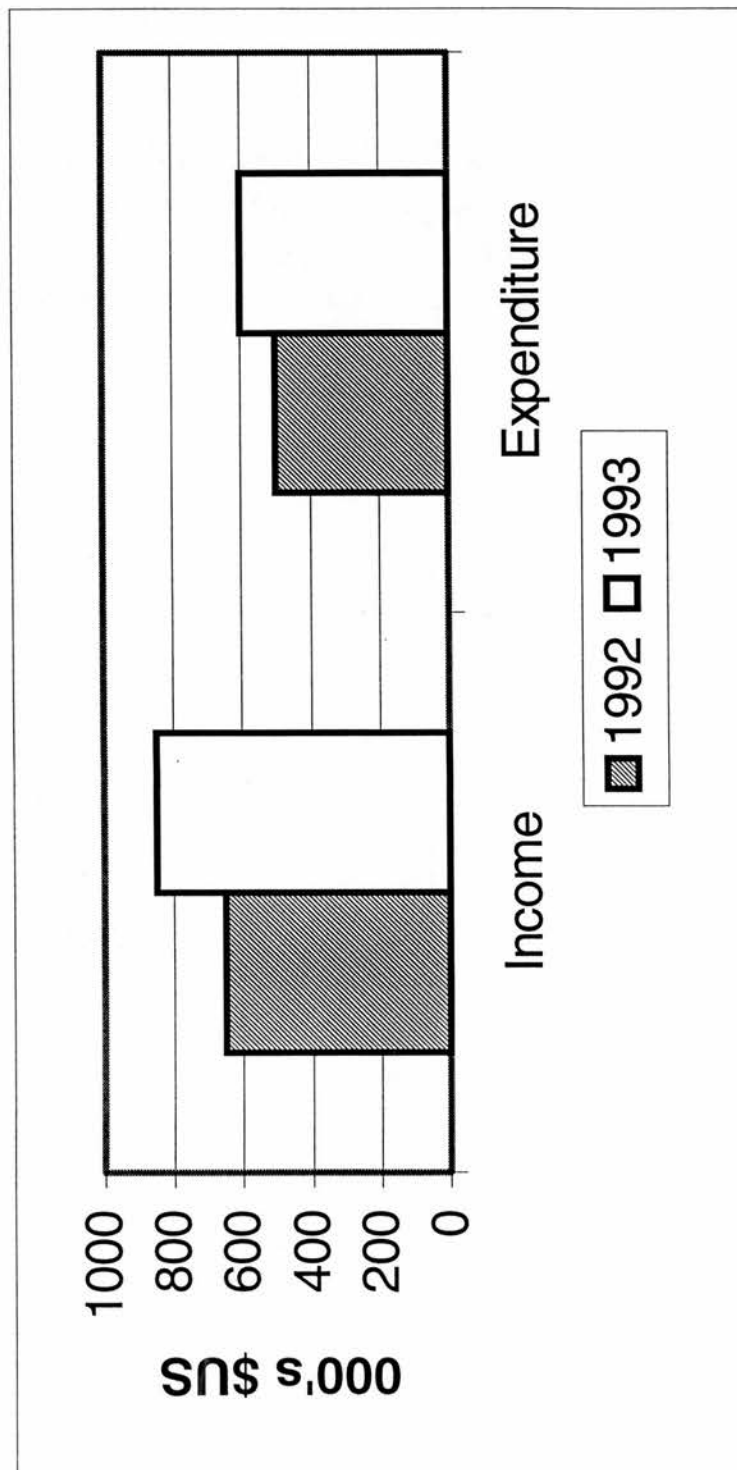


Fig. 4.5 Misereor Projects Summary

**Arua Diocese
Projects Summary for Misereor 31/12/93**

Projects Currently being funded

1. Medical Rehabilitation Programme (including Spring Protection)
2. Repairs and Running Costs of Staff House (Volunteer)
3. Integrated rural development programme
4. Rehabilitation of Arua Diocese Workshop
5. Additional allowances for Ugandan supervisor
6. Funding for construction of Catholic Centre
7. Water supply programme
8. Extension of water project funding
9. Running costs for transport and accommodation
10. Funding of fuel tanker for Diocesan programmes
11. Extension of funding for rehabilitation programme for returnees and refugees
12. Funding for completion of staff house
13. Building tools and supplies
14. Funding to improve water supply to Ediofe
15. Additional allowance to Uganda Health Co-ordinator
16. Funding of community-based small scale brick manufacturing unit
17. Funding to establish women's projects in Oluku
18. Degressive contribution to Arua Diocese S.D.D. office (to clear debts)
19. Equipment and tools for Lodonga V.T.C.

Source: Barton & Wamai (1994)

Chapter Five : Imagined Spaces for Lugbara women

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the social and cultural practices of the lugbara in terms of how they shape women's lives. Having 'arrived' in Boraja in Chapter 4, this section sets the scene for my analysis of mission in establishing the local imagined spaces that women occupy outside the mission place, alluding to some of the general influences that Christianity has brought to these. Here, I describe how women are valued and perceived, and the physical environment that bounds their lives outside the mission. The patterns of imagined spaces occupied by women in this chapter are important as a contrast to those I discuss in later chapters. I also briefly discuss the new social class of 'top table people' whose members are concentrated in the mission place, and within which mission women are finding a social space.

It is not possible to speak of a contemporary 'traditional' way of living in the Boraja area. Although I would agree with Middleton's (1992) assessment that the lugbara ethnic group used to live in a way that changed only incrementally over generations until colonisation, this 'old' way of life does not exist anymore. The lugbara people among whom I lived are modern people, leading complex lives that mesh elements of different cultures and influences together. The descriptors 'local', 'traditional' and even 'lugbara' carry an implied meaning for the outsider of 'original' and 'pure', whereas these terms must encapsulate the several dimensions of change that mould the lives people presently lead in Boraja.

For the purposes of this chapter and this thesis, it is important for me to refer to change, and to the norms and practices that mark particular 'influences' evident in contemporary lugbara lives. Some of these influences operate temporally, while others operate spatially. They may be associated with certain historical periods, or particular places and events, but in referring to these influences, I will refrain from 'fixing' them in time. This supports my

argument that the lugbara are a modern people with complex and mixed cultural connections, allegiances and identities.

John Middleton's ethnographic body of work is a western anthropological account of the lugbara people as he encountered them between 1949 and 1952¹. In his major works, Middleton (1955, 1958, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1982, 1992) seeks out and describes the society that met foreign influence. He downplays the cultural influence of missionaries (1992:5), attributing to them a similar impact as the British administration, and concentrates on the religious, social and political organisation of lugbara society as it had been for many generations before outsiders arrived. In this way, and taking account of his predilection for representing the 'untainted' lugbara in a 'salvage' ethnography², Middleton's work, alongside local people's descriptions of 'how things used to be' serve as an historical benchmark for the marked changes that have taken place since these 'records'. From these sources, I draw on the cultural and religious practices from the past which are still significant in contemporary lugbara society by virtue of their continuity or their contrast.

In the years since independence, the colonial and early missionary influences have been replaced by an economic dependence on the 'north', and chaos, war and upheaval have replaced the political stability of the protectorate years. In terms of mission, the initial conflicts of clashing

¹John Middleton is a British anthropologist who lived 'among the Lugbara' between December 1949 and September 1953, and is associated with the Lugbara in the same way as Evans-Pritchard is with the Nuer, in terms of classic ethnography. In his 1992 edition of his seminal work 'The Lugbara of Uganda', he lists some 28 publications based on his ethnography of the Lugbara. Previous descriptions of the Lugbara had been presented by foreigners to the area (Dribery 1931, Mac Connel 1925, Ramponi 1937), and it was not until after independence that local accounts were published (Shiroya 1972). In western academic terms, Middleton has acted as what he prefers to call a 'translator' of Lugbara culture to outsiders. Within missionary discourse, the occasional linguistic work of certain missionaries served their immediate need to learn the language, and referred to lugbara culture rather than 'translating' it as Middleton did (Crazzolaro 1960, Dalfovo 1982).

²A 'salvage' ethnography is one in which a culture is deemed 'in peril', and the role of the ethnographer is to document the 'pure', 'traditional' and 'original' practices and beliefs before they are changed by modernity. This ethnography was common in the time of Franz Boaz and Middleton, but has been severely critiqued since by many contemporary anthropologists. In 'Writing Culture', Clifford describes the "allegory of salvage" as "deeply ingrained" (1986:113), and discusses the deep-

religious beliefs and practices have been followed by a time of tacit compromise, and the contemporary emphasis on inculturation and liberation has created spaces for lugbara Christians within a Ugandan Catholic Church. These recent trends are another source of reference for my analysis of contemporary lives, a more modern context against which to set the everyday of today.

These are the temporal references for my analysis, and there is a third, spatial distinction that I draw upon between the mission place at Boraja and the villages and homes that surround the mission. There is a physical and distinctive boundary between the mission place and the non-mission lands, a fence which marks the legally held land of the parish, creating a 'here' and 'there' dichotomous border. The zone of mission influence is rather less distinct, and to a degree the direct and expressed Christian influence outside the mission place decreases gradually with distance from the chapel, while the many chapels of the parish each have their own zone of immediate influence also. For example, few non-Christian funerals take place within sight of the chapel and mission place; they are much more common in the valleys just out of sound and vision.

This chapter therefore aims to describe the influences that shape women's imagined spaces just beyond the mission place, within the phased zone of missionary and Christian influence. None of these spaces are 'untainted' by the colonial, missionary or contemporary Christian presence, yet they are still markedly different from those which I later examine which are bounded within the mission place.

In the style of several of the contributions to 'Full Circles' edited by Cindy Katz and Janice Monk (1993), the main part of this chapter follows the life course of a lugbara woman, describing the imagined spaces she occupies at different stages in her life, and how she negotiates or copes with these

roots of the salvage perspective in western anthropological thought.

spaces to suit her individual circumstances.

5.2 Birth

This section describes how the birth of a baby girl is greeted in lugbara homes, describing cultural practices that have no Christian element in them (but that do not contradict Christian practices explicitly) and that are continued today. I draw upon fieldnote extracts that demonstrate how lugbara define the 'value' of baby girls and daughters, and how Christian ideas on equality have infringed little upon this value system.

5.2.1 "It's a girl!"

In lugbara culture, the birth of a girl is treated differently from that of a boy, and the customs surrounding the day of the birth and shortly afterwards occasion contrasting celebrations of the new clan member. When the mother delivers a baby in the homeplace or in the hospital, the period between delivery and when the baby's umbilical cord falls off (called *oresi*) is traditionally one in which the sex of the baby is not revealed, and during which the parents ponder over suitable names for the new arrival. Although they may discuss names together, the mother has the final say in the lugbara name of the child, which will reflect the circumstances in which the child was conceived or born³. During these first days (3-7), 'traditional' water from specified local streams and mother's milk are sprinkled on the child, three drops for a girl, four drops for a boy. When the 'ottu' has fallen from the navel, the close neighbours gather at the mother's house, seated outside at sunrise. The mother emerges with the baby and sits beside her husband:

"The husband declares the sex of the child. If it is a baby boy, he smiles and laughs. People burst into excitement and merrymaking. But for a baby girl, the atmosphere looks gloomy. An imaginary notice appears on the face of the father; "My wife is producing foxes"⁴. If this happens many times, divorce may follow."(Oritaru

³ The father usually chooses the child's Christian name for baptism at a later date, when the baby is a little older.

⁴ This refers to the fact that foxes steal the young from a household in the same way as girls do not

The original missionaries to West Nile regarded this naming ritual as 'unchristian', and initially argued that it be replaced by the Christian sacrament of baptism, which in those days of believing in 'limbo' for the souls of unbaptized babies, was performed in the first week after birth. They also argued that the Christian name a person received at baptism should be used as their common name. However, for several reasons, baptism came to complement rather than replace non-Christian naming rituals. The logistical challenge of baptising babies within the short time of a week could not be met by the few missionaries serving the area. Also, the Christian names introduced by the European missionaries gave no account of the circumstances of the child's birth, and so were deemed 'inadequate' on their own⁵. Over the years, lugbara Christians gave their children both Christian and lugbara names, employing both local and Christian ceremonies to confer the names.

The following extracts demonstrate several different aspects to the birth of girls, and the bearing of daughters in Boraja. Elements of pre-Christian and missionary cultures are evident in these extracts, illustrating how neither 'lugbara' nor 'mission' cultures exist in pure form in the lived experiences of local people.

"Michael had some high drama today when Joseph the catechist came to the hospital asking him to drive the ambulance to his home place to bring his wife to hospital with terrible stomach pains. Michael sped like a madman across ditches and streams to the place, where Joseph was greeted by his mother, and there were serious mutterings. Michael feared the worst when Joseph climbed back into the vehicle, subdued. "It would seem that one has delivered," he said. Michael was delighted and bombarded him with all the questions we'd ask at home, what size, what time, what weight etc, before considering that Joseph's wife had just delivered in their modest home. To his surprise,

deliver children for the household, but take their children away to give to another household.

⁵ Old testament Christian names such as Rebeca, Moses, Nathaniel and Samuel were introduced by Protestant missionaries, while certain Italian translations of new testament names were more common in the vicinity of Catholic missions e.g. Peyerina, Fabiano, Karmello and Clementia. The spelling of these names varied widely.

Joseph wanted to return to the mission “It seems we need some sugar” he explained. When Michael remembered to ask whether the baby was a boy or a girl, Joseph smiled and said “Now, that one I don’t really know, but I am thinking it is a boy”. (Diary and Notebook, July 1993)

This extract illustrates how the women usually and ‘normally’ deliver their children at home, attended to by female relatives with experience of delivering babies. Husbands are not generally involved, and medical assistance is seen as a last resort, if not failure⁶.

The exchange between a local catechist, Fabiano Candia and an American volunteer called Candy working in the diocesan pastoral office reveals something about the differences between their attitudes to the birth and naming of a baby girl to Fabiano’s wife, Natalia.

C: And Fabiano, how is your lastborn these days? Is she well again?

F: She is well, the malaria has passed, we are grateful to God for that at least.

C: Is there a name chosen yet?

F: Yes, Natalia has chosen ‘Ayikoru’ - for ‘joy’ you know.

C: How lovely!

Later, when Fabiano left, I commented on how lovely the lugbara name for his baby daughter was, and Candy replied “Yes! Thank God, usually baby girls are given dreadful names with very negative meanings referring to death, misery, hated mothers-in-law and the regretful fact that the baby wasn’t a boy.... I sort of see ‘Ayikoru’ as a success, when a girl is greeted with as much joy as a boy.”

(Taken from Diary and notebook for June 1993)

The fact that the catechist gave his daughter a ‘joyful’ lugbara name heartened Candy, glad that the ‘value’ of his daughter was publicly denoted in her name, hoping that this signified a Christian attitude of equality towards “all God’s children” and a move away from ‘unchristian’ values attached to girls and women. However, later conversations with neighbours in Boraja revealed other possible reasons for the naming of baby Ayikoru:

⁶ The issues that the presence of the hospital raises for local women delivering babies, in medical as well as cultural terms is explored further in chapter 7.

“If she was the first born, or if all the other children were girls already, then the name would not have been joyful.”

“They chose that name because they know that the priests and you ‘mundu’ like it, they want to remain friends with you.”

“Natalia chose that name to please him since he wants to please those others. And even, she is just glad that she is still the one having his children.” (Diary extracts, June 1993)

So it is clear that there are contrasting reactions to the arrival of baby girls into a household, hinging upon the differing ‘values’ ascribed to them in co-existing but contrasting cultures. Naming of a child is often a political statement, since it is the unquestioned opportunity for the mother in particular to note the circumstances and conditions surrounding that time in the lives of the family or stage in the marriage⁷. In cultural terms for the lugbara, a woman carries a material value that is absent in the missionary terms of valuing women, and it is the weight of this material value that explains how baby girls are welcomed, how they are socialised and nurtured into puberty and marriage outside the mission place.

5.2.2 Sons and daughters

As I briefly mentioned already, a lugbara bride proves her value to her husband’s family by producing children, and particularly a son. Quite apart from the emotional attachment to children and the very communal nurturing of children, they are ‘valued’ in material terms also, because of the marriage system. A son is necessary to carry the clan seed, and ensure the longevity of the lineage, while a daughter is necessary to earn the brideprice, which will be used when the son marries, while facilitating the longevity of a neighbouring clan’s lineage. Both are valued and necessary. However, a family with either all sons or daughters is ‘at risk’ of failing to continue the lineage, and people working in mission places have

⁷The following examples of lugbara names illustrate how their meanings reflect circumstances surrounding the time of the child’s birth : Abiribaru (male) and Ombirua (female) meaning ‘Born in a time of hunger’; Drani (male) and Dratiru (female) meaning ‘Our hopes may be by death’; Candia (male) and Candiru (female) meaning ‘misery’; Afekua (male) and Afekuru (female) meaning ‘My husband is selfish’; Acidria (male) and Acidru (female) meaning ‘I am on the track of divorce’; and

contradictory reactions to the birth of male and female children. While their professed faith instructs that 'we are all equal in the eyes of God', their lugbara cultural heritage attaches certain significance to boys and girls. The following example illustrates how a former parish catechist now working in the Diocese reacted to the birth of his fifth daughter (diary, April 1994).

Ulpiano was a catechist from the parish who now worked for the former Italian parish priest in the Diocesan Pastoral centre in Arua. His wife had just delivered their fifth child, a fifth daughter. There were warm congratulations from the foreigners among whom he worked, but local people laughed at his 'misfortune' in fathering so many daughters. I was talking to him about this.

NG: "And so, why is your mother annoyed at Peyerina for producing another daughter?"

U: "Well, she thinks we need a son. That Peyerina should give me a son"

NG: "But, Ulpiano, you know that apparently the scientists say that it is the father who decides the baby's sex?"

U: (Laughing) "Oh yes! So they say! But my people do not believe these things, that is only foreign talk, they say."

NG: "And you, what do you think?"

U: (Laughing again) "It is God our father who decides!"

NG: "And so many daughters ... surely they will bring you many brideprices. You will someday be a wealthy man with many cows, no?"

U: (Still laughing) "I hope so! But I doubt it. These days daughters are much trouble, they make these love marriages and do not respect our traditions, they can get into trouble and have children too soon, and they need educated too. No, these days the daughters are as expensive as sons."

The following year, Peyerina delivered Ulpiano's first son.

This extract demonstrates how people connected with the mission negotiate hybrid value systems, Christian and non-Christian, when confronted with fundamental issues such as marriage and family.

5.2.3 Little women

In childhood, lugbara boys and girls play freely together. However, from the age of three or four, young girls begin to accompany their mothers,

Alia (male) and Aliru(female) meaning 'Got through unlawful conception' (Mundua 1993:17).

aunts and sisters to the river or borehole to fetch water. This is an exclusively female task. At first she will carry only a few litres, but by the age of six or seven, may be doing so upon her head, strengthening the muscles until she is capable of carrying 20 litres in a jerrycan or large saucepan. The task of 'fetching' is a constant in everyday life, occupying some time after rising, and again before the evening meal, making the borehole or the riverbank a women's place. Only boys swim or play in the river, since they can do so naked without immodesty, and since girls are occupied with domestic duties at home.

Another task for young girls is baby-sitting. When a new mother delivers her firstborn, it is accepted that she will require assistance in the home. An 'endria' (baby-sitter) is appointed from among her cousins or clan members to join the household for a few years. This young girl, aged nine or ten, may be taken out of primary school for this purpose, and her 'reward' for helping the family is the promise of school fees to allow her to return to school. A new mother has still to attend to her household, and although she feeds the baby on demand, sleeps with the baby and is seldom far from the baby, there are times when the baby-sitter relieves her of the responsibility of soothing and being with the baby constantly. The baby-sitter straps the baby to her back in a fabric kitenge sling and walks, sings and talks to the baby, who is understood to require such close attention. Babies are rejoiced over, cherished and made the focus of every attention, growing in a secure and loving environment in their early years. The bond between baby and baby-sitter is close. When the baby is about four months old (said locally to be when they smile), the parents move the child from their marriage bed, since this is around the time when conjugal relations resume. The baby sleeps with the baby-sitter, returning to the mother for night-time feeds when necessary. The baby-sitter will remain with the family for several years, although will only baby-sit for one particular child.

This time spent in another home is a means of keeping clan affiliations alive

and of allowing the girl to make friends outside her homeplace in a closely supervised environment. The bond between the baby-sitter and her charge remains close, even when the child grows, and she marries into another clan. In this way, intraclan and interclan relations are maintained. It is more particularly a preparation time for motherhood. The duties a baby-sitter assumes are entirely female, replicating in many ways those of the new mother. Her responsibilities in the household revolve around the child, but include training in cleaning and cooking. She witnesses the traditions surrounding motherhood closely, and spends most of her time with other women. It is therefore a period of transition between childhood and puberty, and one which will stand her in good stead when being assessed by prospective in-laws for suitability as a bride.

After baby-sitting, the young girl generally returns to her own homeplace and is given considerable domestic responsibilities even if she resumes her primary school education. As puberty approaches, she learns the appropriate demeanour and behaviour of a respectable young woman, being constantly reminded in the family of her 'value'.

An issue of the Diocesan Youth Office's newsletter (Issue 3 1993) carried a Kenyan poem called 'A Freedom Song' by Marjorie Mbilinyi. It is included in the newsletter without comment, but is carried in the anticipation that it be discussed by groups and in classrooms. The poem depicts the story of Atieno, a baby-sitter in the household of her 'modern' uncle, and its inclusion in this newsletter demonstrates a willingness within the diocese to address accepted roles and injustices, even within (male) contexts that are normally seen as 'admirable'. The poem calls into question the story of its narrator as much as of the subject, Atieno. I include it here to illustrate how the role of the baby-sitter has been depicted in this instance, but more importantly, to highlight the sort of material the Youth office is using in its Christian pastoral programmes for young people.

A Freedom Song

Atieno washes dishes
Atieno gets up early
beds her sacks down
in the kitchen,
Atieno eight years old
Atieno yo.

Since she is my sister's child
Atieno needs no pay
While she works my wife can sit
Sewing every sunny day,
With her earning I support
Atieno yo.

Atieno's sly and jealous
Bad example to the kids
Since she minds just like a schoolgirl
Wants their dresses, shoes and beads.
Atieno ten years old
Atieno yo.

Now my wife has gone to study
Atieno is less free,
Don't I feed her, school my own ones.
Pay the party, union fee ?
All for progress? Aren't you grateful,
Atieno yo.

Visitors need much attention
Specially when I work at night
That girl stays too long at market
Who will teach her what is right?
Atieno rising fourteen
Atieno yo.

Atieno's had a baby
so we know that she is bad
Fifty-fifty it may live
To repeat the life she had,
ending in post-partum bleeding
Atieno yo.

Atieno's soon replaced,

Meat and sugar, more than all
She ate in such a narrow life,
Were lavished at her funeral
Atieno's gone to glory
Atieno yo.

Marjorie Mbilinyi, Kenya

5.3 Courtship, Marriage and Sexual Places

For the many generations of lugbara people who have married and procreated to ensure the longevity of their heritage and lineage, marriage refers to the union of two lineages, as well as of two individuals⁸. Some of these rituals and values remain in this 'Christian' era, while others have become uncommon. In practice, and in a way similar to the naming rituals performed for babies, lugbara men and women marry in two systems and with two sets of values and priorities operating in tandem, what *they* call 'traditional' and 'Christian'. In this section I describe the contemporary non-Christian marriage rites, referring to those of the colonial/missionary past occasionally, and also to particular places associated with these rites. Less than 2% of women in Uganda never marry at any point in their lives (UDHS 1988/89), illustrating how marriage is a very deeply held value and tradition

5.3.1 Courtship

Non-Christian lugbara marriage is preceded by a considerable period of courtship, when young men and women settle on their choice of partner. At puberty, young women and men begin to socialise together, unchaperoned, at funerals, in the market, and at other public gatherings such as fund-raisers and political rallies. I now describe the role of Girls' Houses in the colonial era and of markets in the post-colonial era.

5.3.1.a Girls' Houses

⁸Lugbara society is patrilineal and there is exogamous marriage.

Middleton describes (1965) a particular place in family compounds in the 1950s which I did not encounter and which is very rarely found today, but which illustrates how local customs shaped women's places and spaces in the precolonial era. At the edge of large compounds, there used to be a 'Girls' house' supervised by a female elder, where adolescent girls would sleep and have male admirers to visit. This period of supervised, but open exploration of sexuality established friendships between families and clans and facilitated particular and intimate relationships between young men and women to evolve. These days, there are no such designated places for friendships and courtships to take place in family compounds, although in practice, young women do entertain male friends at their home during the night.

5.3.1.b Market places

Boraja people travel to several places to buy produce, depending upon the urgency or nature of the purchase⁹. The most popular market is two miles north at county headquarters at Nyadri¹⁰. This market takes place on Tuesdays and Saturdays within a fenced area. Market days are intensely busy, with people of all ages milling around buying, selling or simply being there. There are three distinct sections within the fenced market place. In the first of these areas, teenage girls gather at the stalls of imported goods, inspecting plastic jewellery, shoes, Chinese dresses, foreign second-hand clothes and fabrics. They chat with the young men in charge of the stalls, who are dressed in their finest imported clothes. The girls can usually only purchase rubber slippers (flip-flops), thread or batteries, but this is the glamorous part of the market where they want to be seen. There is much lingering and loitering here, as young men and women appraise each other

⁹ The collection edited by House-Midamba and Ekechi (1995) discusses the role of African market women and the economic power they wield, with House-Midamba(1995) and Falola (1995) in particular describing the market places they inhabit. However, their discussion does not embrace the social function of the market place, nor the spatial significance of women's roles there, and how the market place is a pivotal sexual location in many African societies.

¹⁰ The British administration introduced markets to West Nile in 1925, creating places where a cash economy could develop. It coincided with the introduction of maize and millet to the area, which quickly became popular for brewing local beers. There are different grades of markets, and they are

in the shadows of the canopied stalls.

In the central open space, women and young girls dressed in everyday worn kitenge wraps and in slippers or barefoot, set out the fresh produce and goods made at their homes on mats, and sit, often with babies, selling, bargaining and socialising. It is a busy, noisy, bright and colourful place; the mats of tomatoes, potatoes, onions, cassava, spices, groundnuts, sugar-cane, sisal ropes and salt presenting a patchwork of vibrant hues beneath open skies. The third area is to the side, where fish are sold in stalls, and it is quite dark and smelly. The fish vendors arrive from Obongi, on the Nile, with tilapia and Nile Perch strapped to their bicycles. Business is conducted in a flurry as each vendor arrives. The stalls are deserted otherwise, as the men retreat to the drinking area behind, drinking local brew fermented by local women.

It is clear that the market serves a social as well as an economic function. It is a place where every sector of the local population is to be found, acting out social roles. Wendy James (1993) uses the African market place as a metaphor for the openness of community life for African women whom she sees as dominating the marketplaces of the sub-Saharan continent, compared to the closeted and hidden lives that women in some other cultures lead. Men and women who are not looking for marriage partners occupy their own gendered spaces, in the central market and around the fish stalls, dealing in local produce and in local issues. Young women and men seeking to impress each other occupy the area where foreign goods are sold, where Lingala music blares from ghettoblasters and where relatively little economic exchange takes place between the sellers and those who spend time there. This is an area of the 'possible', and of anticipation. It sells the glamorous and exotic consumer world beyond the reality being expressed in the other market places, which sell local goods to local people. Male friends of the young men in charge of the stalls hang around and one of their sisters

managed by local RCs.

or cousins will approach with her friends to talk to her relative, thus giving the assembled group an opportunity to address and appraise each other. Later in the day, walking home, the groups of young people dally and flirt and return home glowing.

In the context of contemporary courtship rites, markets such as Nyadri market serve an essential social function. Explicit Christian references to the marketplace are rare. It is listed with other places and events as a place where caution must be exercised and modesty must prevail, in the sermons on 'Occasions of Sin' from the pulpit of Boraja. An issue of the diocesan Youth Office's newsletter to the youth of the Diocese carried this song alongside an article about behaviour change and the peril of AIDS¹¹:

“WHY IS THE YOUNG MAN
CRYING ?
HE’S CRYING
BECAUSE HE GOT AIDS.
WHERE DID HE GET AIDS ?
WHERE DO WE ALL GET IT ?
AIDS BEGINS WITH
THE FLIRTING
IN THE MARKETPLACE
IN THE MARKET WHICH IS
THE CENTRE OF THE TOWN.
I DO NOT WANT TO GO TO THE
MARKET
IN THE MARKETPLACE EVERYBODY GETS
AIDS
AND DIES.”

Composed by a member of one of the diocesan youth groups, this song clearly states the connection between the marketplace, flirting, (unstated sex) and AIDS and death. Written in a style common to teenage composition, it is likely that this song has been adopted and repeated at youth gatherings throughout the diocese. It has been made available to this

¹¹ I have used the uppercase type-face for this song since this is how it appeared in the newsletter, and also because being presented thus, the song accrues some importance and imagined volume in the text, as I imagine was the intention in the newsletter version.

sector of youth, who attend school and youth meetings, through diocesan channels, and therefore can be interpreted as a Christian view on appropriate sexual behaviour in the marketplace. In situating the marketplace as a dangerous sexual place, the diocese is commenting upon both AIDS and sexual behaviour in general.

5.3.2 Marriage Rites

In this section, I describe the contrasting marriage rites that accompany non-Christian and Christian marriages in Boraja. Other studies in Uganda have investigated the social and economic dimensions of traditional marriage rites and brideprice, noting that in the north, where brideprice is high, it "entitles the man to the woman's labour, her obedience, her sexual availability and her fertility" (Barton and Wamai 1994:120)¹². Both are practised today, so I use the present tense, although when certain situations were significantly different in the colonial and missionary era, I have made this clear.

5.3.2.a Marriage rites : Contrasting traditions

When a couple decide that they would like to marry and set up home together, they inform their parents, and the groom's father consults the girl's elders to check that their lineages are adequately removed from each other to permit marriage. This complete, a series of 'visits' from the groom's family to the bride's takes place over several months, while the brideprice is negotiated and met. Brideprice is believed to render marriages more stable because of the negotiation between families (Radcliffe-Brown and Foorde (1950), Kayongo-Male and Onyango 1984). In lugbara society, a bride's family receives a 'brideprice' from the lineage of the groom. As such, a daughter 'earns' valuable income for a family that it usually needs to support a son's marriage.

¹² These studies are Kayongo-Male and Onyango 1984, Nzita and Mbagwa-Niwampa 1993, Kirumira et

As Middleton has stressed (1992:62), and which local people in Boraja are keen to impress, although the local word for 'to marry' is 'je', meaning 'buy, exchange or barter', 'brideprice' does not signify the 'buying' of a bride. Rather, it is the exchange of the woman's procreative power and sexual rights from her own lineage to her husband's in return for certain property. In the pre-colonial and colonial era, brideprice was paid entirely in livestock, particularly cattle, since this was a local signifier of 'wealth', and livestock exchange still represents the major component of the brideprice. A bull is paid initially to denote the transfer of the bride's sexual rights. Then, to acknowledge the more substantial and meaningful transfer of the bride's procreative power, several head of cattle are exchanged, along with some arrows, to compensate the bride's mother for the loss of her daughter's domestic labour. The final payment of the brideprice is accompanied by a ceremony where the bride's mother carries the three stones that will form the fire in her daughter's new home to the groom's compound. This procession, of all the bride's belongings, is marked by wailing and sobbing, as the bride is literally transferred from her own home to her husband's. There she is expected to behave in a quiet and servile manner until she has 'earned' the respect of the family who has exchanged so much in material terms for her. A 'good' young wife stays in the compound most of the time, fetching, cooking and cleaning. She should help her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law, playing with their children. She should not argue nor speak loudly. She should remain on her knees in the presence of the family men, fetching them warm water, mats and stools. Once pregnant, she has proved that she is being a loving wife and that she is fertile, so relations ease in the compound. Once she delivers a baby son, she is finally accepted as a clan member.

I will now describe the ideas and practices of Christian marriage, as introduced by Italian missionaries to the area since the 1940s. The concept of marriage introduced by the missionaries concentrates on only the two

al 1994 and Olowo-Freers and Barton 1992.

individuals being married, and emphasises a lifelong spiritual marriage between the man, woman and God. Couples should enter the marriage in a state of purity, and should resist sexual temptation until married. The negotiation and payment of brideprice was deemed 'heathen' by the original missionaries, and discouraged because Christian marriage is supposed to occur between two freely consenting people, without any family obligations or pressures. Christianity teaches that God is an integral part of the marriage, and that marriage is therefore a lifelong commitment. It is therefore insoluble, so divorce is impossible. Likewise, marriage must be monogamous, since one husband cannot be linked to God through several marriages at once. Once a couple are joined in 'holy matrimony', a sacrament, they are united until death. Therefore in one ceremony, Christian marriage contests local practices of sexual exploration, courtship, elopement, traditional marriage, brideprice negotiation, polygamy and divorce.

Since the sacrament of marriage was identified by the early missionaries as the key to nurturing Christian family life in this part of Uganda, they employed strict methods to ensure that young Christian men and women were not married traditionally. As Sarah Orache, an employee of the mission hospital recalls (Sarah Orache, Tape 11, June 1994):

"At that time the Comboni missionaries arrived in Gulu (1920s), they were going in the villages and collecting boys and girls, those who were newly eloped, living together and married traditionally. They were taking them to Gulu, to Gulu mission,... and the girls are kept in one place and the boys in another, although they are instructed together. So many parents were taken like that. They received their instruction for two years and then they wedded in the church.

There was one priest called, in my language, 'Igackamatai' ... you see, we plant calabash, when it is dry, you have to dissect it with a hot knife, called this name, 'Igackamatai', so they called this missionary 'Igackamatai' because he was actually forcing people. Like when he find a young couple they say "Now we are married, we want to settle and organise ourselves", but they were being forced."

So, from the outset, the instruction in the Catholic faith was part of the preparation to enter Christian marriage. 'The Poor Christ of Bombo'

dramatically recreates a similar, although fictional situation in Cameroon, and the original missionary presence in Boraja in 1946 were 'training camps' for instructing Christians. As Susan describes, this immediately created a separate and sexually divided environment, and linked this separation of men and women with Christianity and holiness. It contrasts markedly with the practice at the time of allowing young couple to sleep together in supervised Girls' Houses.

5.3.2.b. Post-colonial and Christian adjustments

These days, the brideprice is more complex than in the past. The first bull is most often paid at the very start of negotiations, as the couples enter a sexual relationship at an earlier stage than in the past. Chickens, sheep and goats are often added to the main exchange of cattle, given during the visits, which mark the continuing negotiation phase. Cash is sometimes exchanged, as farmers growing tobacco earn money. Fabrics may be given to the mother-in-law, while the bride accumulates saucepans and plastic dishes purchased from the local market to bring with the traditional three fire stones. These days a groom has to pay other components to the brideprice which acknowledge the modern effort of raising a 'good girl'. He will have to pay 'malaria', a cash sum to compensate the family for all the medical treatment they have spent on their daughter. He will also pay another sum to acknowledge the amount spent educating her. If the bride is educated to secondary school level or beyond, there is a chance that she will be in a position to earn money, working as a teacher or nurse. Her family is compensated for their loss of this earning capacity in which they invested years' of school fees. As a result of time spent outside the family compound (at school, in training, working), lugbara brides find the expectations of their husband's families unpalatable, and these days, often refuse to live in his family compound, to be subjected to insults and to have to 'earn' his family's respect. The groom often shares his bride's modern outlook, and the tension is drawn along generation rather than gender lines.

In Boraja, many people comment that marriage is the main battleground between the missionary church and lugbara cultural practice. Symbols of status in lugbara society are condemned in Christian terms, and conflict arises when a Christian is expected to sacrifice something that earns him prestige in local terms. The main contest of this conflict is in the practice of polygamy¹³.

"In the case of marriage, the idea of polygamy was opposed... something which showed richness, prosperity, fame and prestige for the lugbara in a man." (Mzees, Tape 15, August 1994).

Furthermore, in the missionary era, if a man had several wives and wished to become a Christian, he was instructed to discard his other wives, and retain his first wife only (Hastings 1967). In time, the missionary priests realised that this was causing the outright neglect of second and subsequent wives and their children, so they directed that a man should carry out his responsibilities towards his wives and children, but be only 'married', in the full Christian sense, to his first wife. Events of the recent past, when families have been fragmented and reunited, have caused both missionary and Ugandan clergy to adopt less austere judgements of some Christians who find themselves in polygamous situations.

In the missionary era, it was common for 'Sinners' to be denied certain other religious services, if they were not 'properly' married :

"If I married a girl, not in the modern way in the church, then they (the missionary Fathers) would stop my parents from receiving communion. I can attend mass, but not receiving communion or reading in church, and if a child of mine dies, the priest will not come, but send a catechist instead." (Mission boy, Tape 10, 2nd August 1994)

¹³I have used the term 'polygamy' throughout this text because that is the term used locally in Boraja and West Nile when this issue arises. The practice among the Lugbara is actually 'polygyny', where a man may have several wives at one time, but a woman may have only one husband at one time. Middleton estimated that in 1954, 60% of marriages in Lugbaraland were polygynous, I would put the estimate lower for the 1990s in mission places. Recent research has indicated that AIDS-related fears have led to a decline in polygamous marriages (Moodie *et al* 1992, Kirumira *et al* 1994), while other studies have recorded that it is becoming rarer among younger women and among women with a high level of education (UDHS 1988/89, Kirumira *et al* 1994). The impact of the 'Disturbances' on married life for many families meant that through separation and exile, marriages were forcibly split apart, and a man or woman, believing themselves widowed, often entered another marriage. In such cases, on return to the homeplace, either the former union was reinstated, or the new marriage held. It was very rare for a man to unite the two households in these circumstances.

These days, Catholics take part in both lugbara and Christian weddings. As the number of lugbara priests has increased, the intolerance of traditional marriage rites has become less vociferous, and while the church still disapproves strongly of brideprice, divorce and polygamy, it is less vocal in its condemnation of couples living together and having children before being married in church. The children of 'unmarried' couples will be baptised, and in practice, the parents receive Holy Communion regularly. Priests now recognise that most Christians want to ensure the lasting success of their union before committing themselves to the indissolubility of a church wedding. To a degree, it is a measure of the church's success in preaching the irrevocable nature of a Christian marriage that most lugbara Christians do not marry in church until they have at least one child, and therefore have social and family commitments to support their union. A consequence of this practice is that when lugbara Christians do decide to marry in a Christian ceremony, the sacrament is 'inculturated' to a degree that 'makes sense' of local traditions. Also, the concentration of a couple's resources and attention into one explicitly Christian expression of commitment demonstrates, in my opinion, how seriously the sacramental nature of the commitment is taken¹⁴. Church marriages are memorable events for the entire community, as the following description of a local Easter wedding ceremony illustrates :

Our first Easter in Boraja, and it's been more memorable than any I can recall. For a start there was no escaping it. This 'Holy Week' has set the agenda for everything roundabout, it's extraordinary. There was the full tridium of Easter services, stretching from Good Friday until Easter Sunday, including ceremonies I never knew still existed. During these days, local people preparing to receive the sacraments for the first time on Easter Sunday have been attending a preparation course in the Parish Learning Centre near the church. So, scores of men, women, children and babies have thronged to the Centre, enthusiastically attending the classes, preparing songs and celebrating into the night. The noise has been amazing. The local clergy call the people 'Penitents', but local people and the course participants themselves call them 'the Sinners'. The idea is that those who are preparing for marriage are living in a state

¹⁴ The Catholic obligation to marry in church was formalised in Trent with the 'Tametsi Decree' of 1563, and in some countries this was not applied until 1908, so only since then has it been "universally obligatory for a Catholic to marry in a church" (Hastings 1967:177), but the tridentine decree has been applied to the African missions all through the modern period.

of grave sin, from which they will be released during the Easter mass, although they're a pretty cheerful bunch of sinners!

We went to the Good Friday mass, but had to leave after a few hours just to breathe. We came down to the house, had a drink and went back up but couldn't get in, the chapel was heaving.

At the Easter vigil mass, on the evening before Easter Sunday, a large fire was built on the steps of the church, and lit. The Sinners, dressed in their smartest clothes and some wearing shoes, arrived in a crowd from the PLC. The couples about to be married had their children running around, clinging to their legs and strapped to their backs. Apparently, in the 1970s, the Italian priests used to distribute long white European wedding dresses for the women to wear, but these are so worn out now that the 'brides' prefer to wear their own dresses of Chinese polyester, from Nyadri. The wealthier brides in Arua are forking out for big dresses again since they're en vogue in Kampala, apparently.

These families were joined by adults and babies being presented for baptism. All these people were joined by excited family members in the church, and the place was filled to overflowing, and people clustered around the church door trying to see inside. There was an air of anticipation, of imminent celebration, of excitement. I think there was a sense of connecting in a communal and emotive way, the rebirth of those receiving sacraments, and the resurrections being commemorated. It's like the whole sense of Easter is real here.

The service itself lasted five hours, and it included dozens of baptisms and weddings, as well as the usual Easter liturgy, with its processions and ceremonies. Afterwards, with loud shouts of delight, the baptised, confirmed and married returned to the PLC, where they ate, drank and sang far into the night. The following day, the couples returned to their homes to have the final celebration of their traditional marriage ceremonies, marking the final payment of the total brideprice. Apparently it is rare for marriages which have reached this stage of affirmation to flounder. (Diary and Fieldnotes, April 29th 1993)

So, the rituals and traditions surrounding the courtship between young men and women remain, and so the lugbara traditional recognition of this period between girlhood and motherhood is retained. Christian marriage is desirable in conjunction with motherhood, but it is not considered necessary before the relationship is cemented with a child. The negotiation about brideprice still continues, so the value of the bride's sexual rights and reproductive powers is given its full weight. By combining the two marriage systems, young lugbara

Christians today enjoy the advantages of both. Within the security of lugbara marriage rites, a young woman can assert her sexual identity without shame, and then when the relationship has endured, and even produced a child, and when the couple can afford the expense of a church wedding, she can enjoy the added 'spirituality' and respectability of a Christian wedding and the indefinite security that it affords. Certainly in places near the mission, the 'blessing' of a Christian marriage was considered the final element of a union which had been through the trials of testing compatibility. A church married couple became more respectable in communal mission discourse.

There are situations connected to the lugbara and traditional rites of courtship and marriage, but which occur outside the 'norms' or 'respectable' behaviour and which are accommodated in different ways by the co-existing traditions.

5.3.2.c Illegitimacy

In the time of courtship and sexual exploration, whether sexual intercourse actually takes place, in the girls' house, or in the fields surrounding a funeral compound, is not terribly significant, unless it results in pregnancy. As in the past, if a girl becomes pregnant before marriage, a cow is paid from the father of the child to the girl's father. The couple might sometimes continue their relationship and marry, but the payment of the cow was 'compensation' for the girl's lost virginity and 'illegal' infringement upon her procreative power. The brideprice she could attract as a mother would be one cow less than she would attract as a 'virgin'. The imagined space moves from 'girlhood' to 'motherhood' and she enters new discourses.

Susan Baba was a local woman who participated and led women's group activities in the area. I was talking to her after the news had spread that her daughter in Secondary School in Arua was pregnant.

"Ah, this is a disaster for us, really. We had all our hopes in her, she has disappointed us so much I cannot tell you. You know, I have five sons and only this one daughter, she is the only one. She is smart, and I wanted to make her up to be a nurse or a teacher at least, to make a good marriage. Now that is lost. She will not take her examinations,

she will just be in the village and we will have no cows for those other boys.”(Diary, 21st February 1994).

Babies who are born outside local or Christian marriages are baptised alongside other children, and there is generally a sense of compassion for the young mother and child who have no material means of support. While the young mother may be called ‘silly’, the father generally holds the responsibility for the pregnancy. If he is already married, or in a position of responsibility in the community, he may well be reprimanded publicly by the RCs or parish priest.

5.3.2.d Eloping

In the pre-Christian and colonial eras, ‘elopement’ was when the young man and his brothers forcefully kidnapped the bride and brought her to the new house he had built. She would be lifted and carried screaming to his home, where she would remain in his house for several days without being seen. When her family located her, they would demand a cow immediately, which served as a financial ‘penalty’ on the young man because of his impatience and disregard for tradition. The girl would be expected to remain there, since by now she would certainly have become the young man’s ‘wife’. Brideprice would be negotiated and paid retrospectively, and the marriage would be considered normal once these exchanges were finalised.

Elopement these days is not so much a matter of kidnapping, as of planned rebellion by the couple together. If negotiations are taking longer than the young couple can bear to live apart, a mock ‘kidnapping’ may be staged after meticulous preparation. This occurred when Aseru Janet, who cooked in our compound, married at Christmas 1993. The story of her situation also reveals how the lives of young lugbara women may be shaped by men and by outsiders, and is drawn from diary and notebook entries for December 1993 and January 1994.

Aseru Janet is a seventeen-year-old young lugbara woman, who left school at Primary 4 with a good command of English. Her mother was a

petty trader in Nyadri market, and her father worked on the family home, but of her partner Janet simply said "That one is a drunkard". Money ran short for school fees and Janet was withdrawn from school so that her elder brother could finish his studies. One of her uncles, on her mother's side, was the 'in charge' of the Catechist Training Centre in the mission, and when he heard that the American volunteers were looking for an assistant cook, he suggested Janet. So, she was hired to work alongside Stephen, a trained cook in his 20s, who had worked for most of the volunteers that had been in Boraja.

A few weeks after we arrived in Boraja, Stephen stole a large sum of money, and was 'sent away'. We were relieved to decrease the number of people in our employ, because we felt so uncomfortable about the whole issue. Then we discovered that Stephen had not been training Janet to cook at all, but had told her that she was there to look after his kitchen, and to clean up after him. Since all the other cooks working for Europeans in the missions and NGO compounds around West Nile were in fact men, Janet had presumed that this was true, but was delighted when we asked if she would like to train properly to cook 'muzungu' food for us. When it became known that Janet, 'a mere girl' was to be cooking for us, several elderly male cooks presented themselves at our door, as "proper" cooks. Janet lived in the compound of her uncle, and spent her wages on her brothers school fees and on building a new house for her mother.

In time, she also spent money on clothes and household utensils, and became very keen to visit Nyadri market as often as possible. We learned that she had 'certain admirers' there, and that we should be prepared for her to 'elope'. One day, Janet told us to expect a visit from herself and 'Mr. Jimmy' on Sunday afternoon, and that Jimmy particularly wanted to be introduced to Mr. Michael. We asked a local friend what this was all about, and after much laughter, were told : "But, Mr. Michael, you are looking after Aseru Janet, you are like her brother-uncle. Mr. Jimmy must meet you, like he is meeting all her family."

We were happy to welcome Janet and Jimmy to visit, but were apprehensive about the formality and significance of the impending visit. Our friend accompanied the pair to the house and acted as interpreter for Jimmy, whom it turned out hadn't a word of English. Our own command of lugbara provided a full two minutes of conversation, so we were probably all relieved that Alioni Gabriel was there to chat to everyone. Jimmy had brought us a gift of a chicken, symbolic of his 'negotiation' with Mr. Michael, and was dressed in very smart imported clothes for the visit.

Before Christmas Janet shyly informed me that she would be moving 'that way' after market on Saturday. Congratulating her, I said that she

could take an extra week's holiday since it wasn't every day that one moved 'that way'. Over Christmas, Janet and Jimmy did indeed 'elope', and she went to Jimmy's home rather than her uncle's. After a few days he came to visit us, very annoyed. He said how ashamed he was that his niece had let us down in this way, and had eloped with Jimmy. He was distressed that she couldn't 'live the sacramental life' until her marriage was blessed in church. When I assured him that we weren't disappointed, and that Jimmy seemed a very responsible young man, he realised that we knew about the relationship. When he heard that I had given Janet extra holiday to mark the event, he was perplexed. He then went on to stress that he should have been the one to facilitate her negotiations, but that she had not been open with him because he was an eminent catechist.

Janet then lived in Jimmy's compound, where Jimmy's mothers and sisters tested her 'suitability' for their son. Janet and her mother-in-law argued a lot at first, manifest in Janet's decision to cook for herself, and the mother blamed Janet's 'stubbornness' on the fact that Jimmy allowed her to continue working for the Mundu at the mission. Things eventually calmed down, helped in part by the fact that Janet's income made life more comfortable for the whole compound, and that Janet herself employed a cousin to carry out any community duties that she missed. In Easter 1995 Janet and Jimmy were married in Church (at her Uncle's insistence), the brideprice was settled in full and Janet was thrilled to be expecting her first child (a boy, delivered in October 1995).

Changing mission practice, influenced by an awareness of the need to offer economic opportunity to women, has afforded Janet an opportunity that previously would only have been offered to men. Socially, this opportunity was tolerated, because people knew that she was a 'good' young woman, from a good family who was unfortunate to have a father who drank excessively. The skills she has learned are immediately marketable only to expatriate employers, but Janet also hopes to eventually buy her own oven, to bake bread locally to sell.

The involvement of temporary expatriate employers in the traditional negotiation of marriage rites indicates how Janet's working life is viewed. It also shows how men are assumed to bear responsibility for women, and how Janet was considered both the property and responsibility of her male employer (and not of her three female employers). In being able to do a man's

job, in being able to support her brother, build a house for her mother and prepare herself for marriage, Janet's self-esteem was enhanced. Perhaps unwittingly, the American volunteer who hired her had created a new social space for Janet to occupy, and given her an elite social place to spend her working time.

Some older local women did criticise her, since she was deviating from a woman's traditional role and apparently was dependent on Mundu. Janet's peers were happy for her, rather envious of her chances and anxious to benefit from her affluence and generosity. Finally, Janet's relationship with her husband and with his family was on a slightly different footing than other girls her age - due to her being in paid employment. She was negotiating a new space for herself within the traditional role of a young new wife, and this was tolerated to an extent, because her working benefited the entire family.

Janet's uncle, the catechist, was torn between his local traditions and those he upholds in his everyday work for the church. He was embarrassed that Janet's elopement was so public, and that we knew about it before he did, and annoyed that Gabriel Alioni acted as chaperone when the couple visited us. Perhaps he was concerned about her wilfulness, no doubt nurtured by her earning power from working in the mission.

The example of Janet and Jimmy's elopement illustrates how this 'traditional' deviation from courtship and marriage rites has been tempered by the social and economic change brought to some women's lives by the mission. Despite the new spaces and places that have been created for and occupied by women in mission places, local customs and rites continue to be met, albeit in transformed ways.

Although the Christian teaching and practice of marriage encourages the begetting of children, a woman's explicit sexual role is understated. In contrast, the lugbara tradition acknowledges the sexual power of the bride in a

much more obvious way than the Christian marriage rites do. The Christian marriage marks a woman's passage from girlhood to motherhood, whereas the local lugbara traditions fully recognise the interim phase of womanhood, where the bride is sexually active, but not yet married and a mother. The imagined space that lugbara women occupy in this time of courtship is explicitly sexual in a way that the Christian imagined spaces (and the images attendant to them) are not.

5.3.3 Married Life

There are times in married life when marriage does not prove to be the harmonious and procreative environment hoped for. Two of the main conditions infringing upon married happiness are childlessness, and divorce.

5.3.3.a Childlessness

In both lugbara and Christian perceptions of marriage, it is the stable environment in which to bear and rear children in the traditions of the union.

If no children are conceived within a year of marriage, it is assumed that the woman is at fault, and pressure is brought to bear upon her to conceive. If she does not conceive, the husband's family will usually blame witchcraft initially, and take steps to smooth any troubled relationships known to exist. If she still fails to become pregnant, they will urge him to either send her home (thus reclaiming the brideprice paid for her procreative powers), or to take another wife. The decision he makes depends on several factors. If the marriage was a 'romantic love match' (considered a modern phenomenon by lugbara elders), he may be patient and give his wife many years to conceive, or even accept that she cannot. If he is wealthy, he can gather brideprice for a second wife relatively easily, and build another house in the compound for her. If he is poor, and has brothers gathering brideprice, and no sisters to earn any for the family, he may send his wife back to her family, and demand a portion of the brideprice back.

Another determinant of his decision is whether the marriage has been church blessed or not, and it is for this reason that most couples wait until the marriage has been 'cemented' with children before committing to a Christian ceremony. In an attempt to reach a compromise on the premises of marriage between the two contrasting systems, Catholic priests (particularly Ugandan ones) now insist that if the two marriages are to be entered upon, that all components of the brideprice be completely paid between a childless couple before they can receive the sacrament of marriage. In this way, the insolubility of the Christian marriage is matched by the finality of the lugbara match. In effect this means that it is extremely rare for a couple to enter a Christian marriage until there is at least a visible sign of fertility, as most families of young grooms do not pay the final instalment of brideprice until a child is born to the union. If a couple ask a priest to marry them before the birth of children, he will probably do so, since to deny the sacrament in this case would contribute to the condemnation of a 'barren woman', which the church officially disapproves of. Such cases are rare.

Only after a man has failed to impregnate three wives, is he considered to be infertile, a terrible shame in lugbara culture. In the process of marrying these wives, his first or second wife may have remarried and conceived children to other men, thus raising suspicion about his fertility. It is said locally, that a man will allow his wife to sleep with other men and bear their children, rather than let his infertility be known. If a man is considered locally to be infertile, he will usually leave the area in disgrace, as happened with Stefano Acidri in Boraja, who eventually left for Entebbe, where he was not known. Then, his first wives remarried without shame, although their brideprice was reduced.

5.3.3.b Divorce

Nabaitu (1992) recorded that marital instability may result from infertility, alcoholism, extramarital sex, young age at marriage, polygamy, perceptions of laziness, economic problems, extended family obligations and sexual dissatisfaction (see also Barton and Wamai 1994:121). Divorce happens in traditional marriages, and separations happen to Christian marriages in Uganda, bringing complex renegotiations of the conditions of the original union, which in a sense 'measure' how successful the marriage was in the terms expected of it.

If a couple divorce after children have been born to them, the woman's family must return the brideprice to the husband's family, minus one cow for every child born of the union. Therefore, if she has been a 'good' wife, and borne many children, this will be reflected in little or no reimbursement of the brideprice. The following example, drawn from diary notes from April and May of 1993, details the story of Rebeca Tiperu, and illustrates how a husband can exert 'ownership' rights over his wife's reproductive powers even after they have divorced, but also how contemporary local practice and opinion take account of circumstances of displacement.

"Rebeca Tiperu worked in our compound in Boraja. She had three children to her husband, although she lived at her parents' compound since separating from him several years previously. Her son remained with the father, while Rebeca looked after the two girls. In time, Rebeca became friendly with a man who worked at Nyadri market, and in 1993, became pregnant with his child. At first, she did not reveal her condition to us, as she was afraid she would be dismissed. After some time, her pregnancy became obvious and we reassured her that she would not lose her job, and that she was entitled to maternity leave.

Rebeca's relief was short-lived, because a few days after she had settled these arrangements with us, two policemen arrived at our compound from Boraja Headquarters to arrest her. Her husband had heard that she was pregnant, and knew that the child was not his. He reported Rebeca to the police, saying that she owed him money from the brideprice he had paid many years before to her family. He made sure that the police called at her workplace, because he wanted us to find out about her pregnancy in a very public manner. He presumed that because we were

Catholic missionaries, we would at least dismiss Rebeca (which would gain him some satisfaction), and he hoped that we would pay the fine that he was charging Rebeca. Although she was taken to the police station and held for questioning for several hours, Rebeca's case stood for itself. The local RC came and settled the matter, supporting Rebeca's story that her husband had been a drunkard and had beaten her excessively. He had since neglected his two daughters, whom she was rearing alone. Having neglected Rebeca so, he could no longer claim any 'ownership' of her reproductive rights, and so was entitled to no compensation for her pregnancy to another man. He was also told that it was shameful that he should try and take advantage of a woman seven months' pregnant, and of her employers who she had reported were very good to her. Rebeca's husband was sent out of the county in disgrace. A few months later, Rebeca delivered a baby girl whom she named Oguzo Grace, the first name meaning 'they are all laughing at me, but now I do not care'.

It is interesting that the husband's claim to Rebeca's reproductive rights was entertained at all, and that the understanding and conditions of her original brideprice should endure through abuse, separation and the 'disturbances'. There was no local support for Rebeca's husband's claim, although there was a tacit understanding of the grounds upon which he made it. In this case, Rebeca's father had already settled the issue of 'repaying' brideprice when the divorce took place, although the settlement was paltry since she had borne her husband three children, and the divorce took place during the disturbances when cash and livestock were in limited supply.

Rebeca's divorce was a secular arrangement, not a religious one. Although she was in fact Protestant, she was as unlikely to seek a church annulment as a Catholic woman would. She attended both Protestant and Catholic church services, but did not receive Catholic sacraments, and generally occupied a Christian space that suited the circumstances that had befallen her. Rebeca rejoiced in her new baby - evidence that she was still fertile and still loved. In fact, she claimed to enjoy her current status where she is raising her daughters in her own family home, and supporting herself. She is dependent on no man, and the fathers of her daughters are unlikely to reclaim them. As a working mother, Christian, divorced and with a new baby and no man at home, Rebeca demonstrates the complexity of the spaces that women in Boraja can

now choose to occupy.

5.4 Old Age and Death

In common with most ethnic groups in Uganda, community respect accrues with age, and the oldest members of clans and villages are the most respected. To live beyond 60 years of age is admired while octogenarian 'Mzees' are seldom found. Old women are pivotal in family and community life, issuing advice and opinion on appropriate behaviour for younger people, an essential link between 'traditional' and 'modern' customs.

As 'grandmothers', 'mothers in law' and 'aunties' they usually live with their most affluent son, their fondest daughter or whoever lives closest to their marital home. Conflict between mothers and daughters in law is common, and in the past, was expected to ease as the daughter in law fulfilled her marital duties to the satisfaction of her husband and his family. These days, young brides such as Janet tend to tolerate less criticism and it is commonly said that modern wives make very poor daughters-in-law. Many of the most elderly and respected women Boraja have never been married in church, yet are among the most devout Catholics in the parish.

The elderly Christians of the parish recall the first evangelists and were their first converts. As such they weathered the most acute of the cultural conflicts and compromises between European and Lugbara belief systems.

My discussion of this stage of life in Boraja focuses on the function of funeral rites in the social organisation of local lives. Again, this is a major event in which there are two contrasting sets of rites which co-exist, the Christian and the non-Christian lugbara traditions.

5.4.1. Funerals

Traditional funerals are pivotal to the retention of local lineages and customs. When a person dies, they are brought from the place of death

(sometimes the hospital) to their homeplace. If it is a man who still lived in the compound of his birth, the home is where his life and death are literally earthed, since the placenta of his birth, and his remains at death are buried in the place. A woman is buried in her marital home, a child in its father's homeplace too. These days, the particular rites and rituals surrounding death are a combination of local and Christian practice, but the funerals that serve a social function in terms of courtship are those celebrated in the homeplace (Mullin 1965). These are times of intense clan and family activity.

Three or four days of mourning are required after burial has taken place, and the chief female mourners must evidence their grief by lavish hospitality and prolonged traditional dancing. As Middleton noted "because dances may continue for days and nights at a stretch, with the drums never stopping, many people are soon in a trancelike condition and normally expected behaviour may be relaxed" (1965:69). There is wailing, to accompany these endless hours of dancing. The dancing is 'transnight', by firelight, when girls and women continue dancing until they drop from exhaustion. Men feast on meat and local beer and spirits, talking about the departed, delivering eulogies and verbally situating this death in the clan lineage history.

Young men and women support their elders in these roles, and spend long days and nights at the funeral compound too. Funerals are the main occasion for courtship, and it is explicit that funerals particularly are times of sexual tension. Under the 'supervision' of clan elders, young people socialise and spend time alone in darkness, dance together and drink together. Again, as Middleton observed "when the dancing is going on, couples run out of the throng of watchers to the outskirts of the arena" (1965:69). This behaviour is acceptable because it marks the continuity of the clan, despite the bodily death of the deceased. In a charged atmosphere of clan longevity and of traditional customs, funerals are perhaps the main

occasion for young people to enter relationships with each other.

The original missionaries opposed traditional funerals for two main reasons. Traditional funerals were occasions when local ancestor worship was foregrounded, remembered, revived, in direct confrontation with the Christian rites of death, which marked the passage from this life into eternal life with God the father. Secondly, they were perceived as 'Occasions of Sin' ; opportunities for young people to indulge in sexual recklessness.

However, the alternative offered by the church to mark a person's death is not particularly attractive to lugbara clans needing to satisfy social as well as spiritual expectations. While the concept of eternal life is acceptable in a spiritual sense, and does not conflict too dramatically with lugbara notion's of ancestor veneration, the Christian funeral service takes place in the church within an hour, with burial in the adjoining graveyard with 'strangers'. This denies the celebration of clan lineage and the opportunity for a clan to gather and take stock. It also removes the person in an embodied sense from the homeplace.

In recent years, a compromise has been informally negotiated between local priests and their parishioners. The priest or catechist goes to the family home and presides over a funeral mass there for the deceased, which may be followed by speeches and a meal. Then he leaves to allow the traditional funeral to take place, and dancing continues 'transnight' as before, with the same degree of social interaction as has taken place for generations¹⁵.

¹⁵ In fact, in the past ten years, the social phenomenon that has rendered most change to traditional funeral rites has been the death rate of young people dying from AIDS and HIV. Particularly in southern parts of the country, so many funerals are taking place among networks of family and friends, that survivors and mourners cannot pay their respects to each deceased, and still continue supporting their own families. In 1993 and 1994, it was the general practice in Kampala to only have funerals on Saturdays, so that people could hold down their jobs and pay their respects in a condensed form.

5.5 Top Table People

Apart from the changes that the missionaries brought to moments of celebrating life and death to the lugbara people, it is important to briefly discuss a social change they brought about in conjunction with the colonial administration. Middleton briefly discusses the creation of a new social 'class' into lugbara society, or literally 'new people' ('ba odiru), a group who emerged as a result of the creation of chiefs (by the colonial administration), from the status created through cash incomes from cash-cropping or migrant labour and from the educational impact of missions (1992 :97-99). I would argue that the mission has generated 'ba odiru' through its central and peripheral functions, associated to the church, the hospital and the schools¹⁶. These were people who gained their status in society through means other than age or lineage. Middleton describes the 'new people' :

"The more important 'ba odiru' were the educated and semi-educated proteges of the government and the missions, and the wealthier traders... They were men who came into contact with Europeans and other foreigners. They attended the same schools (as each other); they lived in brick houses and adopted a western way of life... These men were lugbara and had intimate ties with lugbara society, but as New People their loyalties were to members of their class as well as to members of their own lineages"¹⁷.

It is the 'ba odiru' with whom I spent most of my time in Boraja ; indeed Boraja is a concentration of this new social class. Boraja also acted as a gateway to this class, and so I witnessed the activities of people on the fringes of the 'ba odiru. Indeed to build upon Middleton's very brief observation of this social class, I concentrate on this group and particularly at the women within the group, there in their own right. The term I prefer to use for this group is one I heard used locally, people of the 'top table'. This term refers explicitly to those who sit at the 'top table' of feasts and ceremonies held

¹⁶ In Lubeck's collection on 'The African Bourgeois' (1987), no mention is made of the role of the missionaries or Christian churches in creating this social group, which is discussed in terms of capital alone.

¹⁷ Van Ufford describes a similar grouping among the Christians of Java in Indonesia, whom he called "a new elite" of "petty traders, shopkeepers, primary schoolteachers and so forth ... for whom the (church-related) development projects provided a means of enhanced status, as well as power" (1993:150).

locally, including the Guest of Honour. This practice of segregating the seating and serving of elite guests arose from the initial contact between lugbara people and foreigners. Foreigners, whether administrators or missionaries, would be seated in chairs apart from the local population, served special food and drink and entertained. The term 'top table' refers to European functions like weddings, where there are certain distinct patterns of behaviour expected of those seated at the 'top table' and from those who are not. It is a local expression of the elite created since the arrival of foreigners to lugbaraland.

In Boraja, the top table people at functions included the parish priest, the headmistress and deputy of BDSI, the managers of the local PTC and VTC, the medical superintendent of the hospital, senior members of the community of Sisters, priests, curates, doctors, teachers and administrators connected with the institutions of the mission place (including us). The combination of those seated at the top table varied according to the 'status' of the event. For example, members of the community of Lay Assistants would be among the top table guests at the Easter feast at the Fathers' Quarters, but would be 'relegated' to the ranks of ordinary parishioners or servers at a Diocesan ordination, where priests and religious from throughout the country would be in attendance.

In the local area of the mission, a recent phenomenon had developed, where 'ba odiru' not connected to the mission were defining themselves as elite. In May 1994, invitations were circulated to the usual mission top table people from a group of fundraisers at Boraja Secondary School who were organising a fundraising event at the school. They called the event a 'Quality Sitting', inviting those people whom they considered well enough to be able to donate substantially to the cause. Each invitation came with a quotation of the amount that the guest was expected to donate. This unusual approach attracted much comment in the mission place. The medical superintendent of the hospital laughed at the 'cheek' of the strategy, and at the 'rude' method of

fundraising. He had been quoted at 2000ush, the highest rate quoted. He sent his apologies and a small donation. There were those (lay assistants and certain teachers) who were offended not to be invited, and those startled by the amounts they were presumed to have at their disposal for donation to this dubious cause (Susan Orache and Rosa Amaniyo)¹⁸. The Sisters were not invited, apparently since it was known that they would not contribute financially and that they would not participate in the drinking and dancing. The priests of the parish were invited and some of them attended.

The event was planned in its entirety by men who were senior students at the school and past pupils running local trading businesses. In the mission, it was considered quite crass to define people's value in such obvious ways. The event, with its speeches, drinking and dancing went on 'transnight', "with the music stopping only 20 minutes before morning mass on Sunday morning". Those who attended the fundraiser did not attend mass that Sunday, thus defining in quite stark terms, those who were merely mission top table people and those who were the elite in modern local terms. The latter fit into Middleton's categorisation of 'ba odiru quite well, but their emergence as a distinctive group who excluded certain mission top table personalities was relatively new to Boraja.

Throughout this thesis, I concentrate upon the mission top table people, who are carving new imaginary spaces in often contentious ways in the mission place. I also mark the access to this elite group by certain groups and individuals who would otherwise not be there.

¹⁸ We were not invited to this 'Quality Sitting' and did not attend. Mission friends advised us that this was because the organisers did not know how to categorise us (the only mundu in the area) for this event, and that our presence might have caused them to restrain their celebrations, which by all accounts were quite raucous.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to draw the main imagined spaces that lugbara women occupy in the area around Boraja mission. It is clear that the dual systems (of 'local tradition' and Christianity) surrounding the major life events for lugbara people, birth, marriage and death, offer alternative ways of constructing these spaces. At one stage, the local lugbara and the Christian systems may have been in conflict and in competition with each other and their terms of accountability directly confrontational, but I believe that tacit compromises have been reached in most practices, which allow lugbara people to occupy roles and spaces that offer them social and economic security at different stages of their lives. In this way, the imagined spaces that men and women occupy in the Boraja area are fluid and flexible, even those which follow the most common patterns of life, as I have described in this chapter. The compromises I mention have often been moulded by circumstances beyond Boraja ; independence, political chaos, a church embracing inculturation, and a Ugandan clergy to implement change and to guide a Ugandan church.

The church's activities have created new places for men and women, spaces which had no traditional references and which have now become contested. Through their educational, health and development activities, new institutions have been built, providing services and employment for men, women and children, and in doing so, have removed them from the homeplace. Not only did these activities create new places, but they also created new imagined spaces for people to assume with redefined boundaries and new codes of accountability. Although this chapter has illustrated already how women like Janet and Rebeca negotiate between local and Christian traditions as they establish personal, familial and social roles for themselves, there are very particular places in the mission where the conflict between contradictory values and beliefs is more vivid and more complex; where the boundaries of accountability ignite. It is the purpose of this thesis to explore these places and the spaces within them, and how they are particularly occupied and contested

by local women.

Chapter Six : Mission Places for Educating Women

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explore the mission experience of 'education' for young women¹. In examining the relationship between a diocesan school for girls and its founding community of catholic lay women, I highlight some of the problems inherent in local management of a paternalistic missionary project, and the power relations between men and women that pervade this management. Setting a changing concept of 'Domestic' in context and marking the transition from missionary to secular education philosophies the school embodies, I define the spaces that the school and the community make available to young women, illustrated by three alternate imagined spaces within the school compound. In doing so, it becomes clear how contested and complex women's roles and identities in these places are. Finally I discuss the issue of 'ownership' in this setting, and how this and the imagined spaces I construct impact upon the 'accountability' of these educational places to their funders and managers.

6.2 Educating Christian women in the missions

The 1920 magisterial Phelps-Stokes report on 'Education in Africa'² reported "It is rather surprising that missions and schools have not made more serious efforts to bring the girls into the schools and to provide suitable training for them" (1920:24), indicating how the colonial powers had ascribed the responsibility of 'education' to the missions, and had certain colonial expectations of how this should be achieved. It also illustrates that girls and young women were presumed to require 'suitable training', which obviously was different to the training that young men and boys were receiving. In this section, I briefly discuss some of the patterns within mission education for women in other places

¹ In using the term 'education', I refer to formal education based on reading, writing and numeracy, as introduced by the missionaries to West Nile. While I appreciate local knowledges are an integral part of girls' and women's overall 'education' in this part of the world, for the purposes of this chapter I refer only to the 'education' which takes place in schools.

² A commissioned study of West, South and Equatorial Africa by the African Education Committee in Britain, the resulting report was "a milestone in the formulation of early colonial policy on education

and times, that resonate in Boraja today, and how the 'imagined' space for a 'mission girl' was constructed as a learning environment in which the cultural signs and codes of homeplaces were removed, and where Christian notions of obedience, cleanliness and holiness were inculcated. As Odora summarises, "Women were taught to sew and knit, be good mates for changed men, helping in the cleansing of native life and to be obedient" (Odora 1993:79).

Kanogo (1993) describes 'mission girls' as "the crucible within which change was mediated" in her paper on mission impact on women in colonial Kenya. She argues that the effects of missions on girls and women have been underestimated, and that 'mission girls', balancing between two cultures, were among the first who paid heavily for the conflicts and contradictions of the mission and colonial encounter with indigenous life patterns. Her Kenyan research echoes my analysis of contemporary 'mission girls' in Boraja, although with significant differences³. She discusses the targeting of African women by European missionaries, identifying them as crucial to the success of christianising African society as a whole, since it was the women who would create a family environment in which African Christianity would grow⁴. Thus targeted, African women were problematised by the European missionaries as being intrinsically more resistant to 'civilisation', as innocent victims of traditional practices of bridewealth and polygamy, and as providers of a 'defective' traditional education to younger women. On all three counts, the policy of encouraging young African women to leave their village homes and attend mission boarding schools was justified (Labode 1993:128/9). Early missionaries worked on the premise that African women were ignorant of how

in East Africa" (Odora 1993:75).

³ Kanogo sites her work in pre-independent Kenya, whereas my work is contemporary. The recent history of independent Uganda has effected dramatic social and economic change, with direct impact upon missionary activity and the socio-economic role of women. Also, missionary policy forbidding female circumcision is prominent in her analysis ; there has never been a lugbara cultural practice of circumcision of men or women.

⁴ Hastings (1993) has noted how in the earliest mission endeavours to Africa, there were generally more female converts than male, and how the first boarding schools were opened for girls rather than boys e.g. The first boarding school opened by missionaries in Uganda was Gayaza (for girls) in 1902, by CMS, followed by Budo (for boys) two years later.

to be true women (in the European mould), a premise unmatched for men, incidentally⁵. Therefore, 'educating' them in women's domestic skills, through activities such as sewing classes, mothers groups, women's guilds and formal schools, would enable good, clean, 'Christian' homes to be created by domesticated African Christian women. Research focusing on historical missionary endeavours in Africa illustrates how ideas about 'Christian femininity' and domesticity were applied in the past ; I hope to trace these historical patterns in the present, contextualised in contemporary circumstances of political insecurity and development project implementation⁶, therefore adding their 'third' cultural element to the understanding of the conflict.

Kanogo (1993) describes how, in the initial missionary encounter, only 'misfits' and 'adventurers' were allowed to leave the village for the mission, and that once there, association with the mission involved *more* than a religious conversion. It also led to social and cultural transformation, while generating contradiction and unprecedented conflict between familiar life patterns in the village and the new opportunities and lifestyle offered at the mission.

Once at the mission, girls were stripped of their traditional village clothes and adornments and clothed in uniforms, and regimented in the cleanliness and orderliness of the community lives their new religious teachers led. Kanogo describes the girls' boarding houses as "fermenting pots of female transformation", and "centres of dissent" (1993:169). By confining their charges to the mission stations, missionaries hoped to protect and wean them from the evil and pagan practices of the village (polygyny, bridewealth, herbal medicines, circumcision and witchcraft). The physical relocation of girls and young women to accommodation within the mission grounds displaced them from the sites and

⁵ This premise operated on the 'double negative' principle which did not problematise African men's gender, but which problematised African women's ethnicity *and* gender as rendering them 'difficult to civilise'.

⁶ The work of Kirkwood (1984)(Rhodesia 1943-1981), Marrow(1986)(Zambia 1915-1940) and Hunt(1990) (Burundi 1946-1960) all examine the transmission of ideas on femininity and domesticity through missionary activity in colonial Africa.

spaces in which their cultural identity was rooted. As Comaroff (1993:323) commented:

"Rules of dress, comportment, and table manners all reinforced these rituals and routines that, even more relentlessly than the formal curriculum, worked to create persons of individual, robust, and uniformly regulated identity".

As a result of their dislocation, the girls became misfits in their own communities and came to question certain cultural practices within their own societies. The rhythm of daily mission life for young women was completely different than in the village. Different routines for eating, washing, cooking, working and praying became established, and in an environment largely detached from men, the obligation and desire to marry during puberty was delayed.

Up until the 1950s in East Africa, missionary efforts to educate women concentrated exclusively on enhancing their 'domestic attributes'. This echoed the educational policies for western women of generations before which emphasised their home-making qualities (Cott 1977, Davidoff and Hall 1987) and which worked on the 'God-given' assumption that women were "incapable of absorbing the same amount of education .. as men" (Carroll 1983:159). Cleanliness, 'proper housekeeping', housecrafts such as sewing, cooking and child-rearing formed the core of an 'educational' programme to 'civilise' and 'Christianise' African women. It was anticipated that the majority of mission girls would marry on leaving school and that there was :

"no need to trouble girls with any more education than they were already receiving, for it might tempt them to try and enter professions of a higher station than the order of the world will permit them to engage in" (Borer 1976 :228).

The curriculum followed in schools was by extension the foundation of appropriate roles for women. The goal of the missionaries was to train young

women to be better Christian wives and mothers. Robert (1996), in her work on the role of women missionaries, argues that they were essential to the entire mission endeavour because of their work with women. Women's domestic role meant that they not only were wives and mothers, but they also nurtured future vocations to the priesthood. Women, as missionaries and as Christian converts were pivotal "because of her female nature, she held the key to the conversion of the home, the source of vocations" (Robert 1996:366).

Labode (1993) in her analysis of Anglican mission work with women in South Africa cites the work of Gaitskell (1988,) who studied mission establishments there at the turn of this century. 'Homes' were created for mission children, as a "rival domestic establishment" to the original village home (1993:131), where boys would be tutored as the Christian leaders of the future, and girls would train as providers of good clean Christian homes for such leaders⁷. Girls' training in the 'Domestic Sciences' also doubled as the housekeeping labour for the school (and often the mission) although not, even in South Africa, as a training for domestic servants⁸.

Odora (1993) has analysed the 'education' of young African women and girls in a postcolonial context of patriarchy and transformation. She argues that the entire colonial endeavour to educate women was established to expressly create and guarantee class, racial and gender differentiation. It also created a 'smokescreen' for the "exploitation, domination, denigration and subjugation" that was taking place, while in promoting literacy, created a condition of illiteracy, a measure of want (1993:79). She draws on Ngugi wa Thiongo (1981) and the work of Paulo Freire (notably 1972, 1974, 1985) to review the

⁷ Labode documents the frequency of 'rebellion' among female students at mission schools, dissatisfied at their restriction to domestic studies and work while male students did 'book learning'. She notes that school rebellion and strikes were not uncommon, and continue as a facet of formal education in Africa today.

⁸ Labode's research in South Africa found little evidence that mission girls trained for a future as domestic servants there, and she concluded that the missionary endeavour of educating African girls in the domestic sciences, although questionable on several scores, was not an exercise to provide cheap skilled labour for white households.

colonialist founded education systems for African women and girls having "less to do with their liberation from male domination than with making them docile and acquiescing subjects of the colonial superstructure" (1993:76). While I find strong appeal in Odora's analysis, it does not attend to the specific nature of the religious setting of 'mission' education for girls, the dominant focus of my perspective. The patriarchal structure of the church and lugbara society underwrites this thesis and in this chapter, I describe how both are manifest in the everyday of a 'domestic school'.

6.3 Educational spaces for young women in Boraja

To locate the pattern of colonial, missionary education for women in a contemporary context, I now shift the focus of my discussion to Boraja, and to one of its educational institutions for young women. I worked as a teacher and as deputy Headmistress at Boraja Domestic Science institute (BDSI), a diocesan boarding school for girls which had been established in 1969 as a training college for Christian women living in community as 'Lay Assistants'. In the following account of the history and the contemporary issues facing BDSI and the 'Lay Assistants', I trace the elements of early missionary thinking on appropriate women's imagined spaces and how formal education should inform these, alongside contemporary notions on women's education and development as expressed in these institutions. In both, I establish the spaces that women occupy within the mission setting.

6.3.1 The Lay Assistants' Society

Stories about the society, its members, its past and future, its troubles and successes, its relationship with the diocese and its founder littered much of the everyday discourse within the school compound, and informed a substantial part of the more general communal discourse in the mission place. The material I present is drawn from my participation in these discourses, and my observation of other's discursive repertoires as they tested the boundaries of their space.

This organisation, which celebrated the silver jubilee of its establishment with great style in Boraja in August 1994 was the brainchild of 'Fr Pedro', an Italian missionary priest who has been in West Nile since the 1950s. Even though it has evolved in directions contrary to those he may initially have intended, he is still considered its patron, nicknamed the 'Daddy' of the Lay Assistants. With the support of Bishop Tarantino, and of the Verona Fathers generally, he identified two issues which he considered needed addressing. His conceptualisation of both issues was firmly rooted in the western notion of 'femininity' and 'domesticity' of his generation and catholic upbringing. The first of these was what he considered the 'plight' of young lugbara women, 'condemned' to a life of early marriage and motherhood in the village, with little chance of an education, and every chance of ending up 'in a state of mortal sin' in a polygamous marriage with children born out of Christian wedlock.

The other concern was the wellbeing of the male priests and religious in the Diocese, who needed trained and trustworthy staff to look after them. Although the Italian missionaries employed men as cooks, gardeners and drivers, the association between men and carrying water made it difficult for the priests to find staff to fetch water and clean⁹. Consequently, young girls were hired by the Fathers as 'housegirls', to take care of the general cleaning of the mission compound, but especially to wash and iron their European clothes. European houses and clothes required a different type and standard of care than the lugbara women carried out in their home compounds. Clothes had to be washed and rinsed repeatedly to achieve the pristine finish the Fathers expected, using soaps, detergents and bleaches especially imported for this purpose. Then, ironing the predominantly white shirts, trousers and vestments required mastery of the charcoal 'iron box', which was virtually impossible to keep clean and hot at the same time. That the Mission Fathers appeared daily in fresh, clean white

⁹ In lugbara society, it was considered emasculating for men to be seen carrying water, since this was women's work, and water places were women's places. That some men, when working for 'mundu' did indeed fetch water and wash laundry was taken as evidence by senior clan members who disapproved of outsiders' influence, of how 'mundu' stripped lugbara men of their gender identities.

clothes was as near a miracle as was ever witnessed in West Nile.

His 'alternative' for young lugbara women at once offered them a formal education, a wage-paying job at the mission, a break for a few 'vulnerable' years from the pressures of life in the village and from the preying eyes of married men, crowned with a spiritual formation, while living in community with other girls in the same situation. By actually removing the girls from the village, he sought to 'buy them some time', a few years in which he imagined they would mature individually, after which, fortified by the experience of good Christian living, they would make excellent mission staff, and eventually good Christian mothers. Fr Pedro's 'alternative' was in fact, an old idea which was new to West Nile. In this way he envisioned creating a new missionary imagined space for young women, which drew on his understanding of 'Catholic' and 'lugbara' boundaries and their terms of accountability. He hoped to remove young women from the lugbara into the Catholic domain of accountability.

It was always clear that this was not an option for clever girls, the daughters of wealthy men, catechists or civil servants, who might instead be encouraged to become Sisters of a religious order. Rather, joining the 'Lay Assistants' was presented as more of a choice than a vocation, an alternative rather than a destiny. Young women, usually from peasant backgrounds, were encouraged to join the society and receive training in 'Domestic Science', to lead prayerful lives in the service of the Diocese and to still entertain the option of marrying a good Christian man in the Diocese. The siting of 'domestic education' was within the Catholic discourse on appropriate roles for women.

For some fifteen years the college provided the Diocese with highly skilled housegirls for its mission and parish houses. A stepped series of vows, promises and commitments has evolved, rather like the novitiate, postulancy and perpetual vows of Religious congregations, and Lay Assistants choose to remain

with the Society for limited periods, or even forever. To be a Lay Assistant, one has to live in community with other Lay Assistants, and work in the service of the Diocese. A Lay Assistant's loyalty is to her community and the bishop, and she has to lead an exemplary Christian life. Her imagined space is thus defined in strict Catholic codes of behaviour and accountability. This supposedly rules out forming sexual relationships with men, since the vows and promises include a commitment to chastity, but the majority of Lay Assistants who did leave the Society did so to marry men they had formed relationships with. There is no official vow of celibacy in the Lay Assistants Society, but married women cannot be Lay Assistants.

Fr Pedro's original vision had been to protect vulnerable teenagers and to serve the practical needs of the Diocese, but what eventually emerged was a grouping of single women who enjoyed the patronage of Italian benefactors, a privileged position within the Diocese and comfortable living and employment conditions. Only when the desire to have a family outweighs the benefits of remaining a Lay Assistant, does a Lay Assistant leave the Society. Often, Lay Assistants have conducted relationships with men quite openly until becoming pregnant, and then their departure is hasty and embarrassed. On at least one occasion, a young woman who already had a child, but who was not married, joined the Society and remained a committed member, while her family raised the child.

In a sense, it could be said that it has been 'misfits' and 'adventurers' who have been attracted to the Lay Assistants Society ; local women claim that the women are not beautiful, would not have made good marriages in the village and that once involved with the Society, a young woman has to be very careful not to spoil her chances of a 'normal' life altogether. Local men find the Society and its members a bit of a puzzle. While local women can generally see why some women might wish to lead a 'soft life' in the Society, their menfolk, without this empathetic appreciation of how hard life for lugbara women can be, cannot appreciate why certain women might wish to escape it. They look rather for

what draws Lay Assistants to the society in terms of educational opportunity, material comfort, spiritual commitment or overseas patronage, and generally have more trouble comprehending a Lay Assistant's choice to join the society than women do.

The Lay Assistants have spread throughout the Diocese, and included Lugbara, Kakwa, Madi and Alur members (see Map 3)¹⁰. There is some degree of friction between members of different tribes, although being a diocesan, Christian organisation, this is frowned upon. They have established houses where their services are most needed, and live in their own separate communities in Boraja, Lodonga and by the cathedral at Ediofe. They are treated as 'quasi-religious' by the Diocese, who call on their services for staffing secretarial posts in Diocesan offices, for running parish houses and for catering and providing entertainment at large Diocesan events. They are certainly below European and Ugandan ordained religious in the Diocesan pecking order, but they are positioned somewhere above mere lay Christians too.

6.3.2 Boraja Domestic Science Institute (BDSI)

At first the organisation of the Society was informal, as Fr Pedro sought funds from Europe to build accommodation for the Lay Assistants. In Boraja, on parish land, he built a European-style house, not unlike the Fathers' Quarters, next to which he constructed the 'Lay Assistants Domestic Science Institution', where the young women received training in 'domestic science' skills. This became known as 'Pedro College'. Since training young women as Housegirls¹¹

¹⁰ In 1994 there were 23 Lay Assistants, five of whom had taken perpetual vows.

¹¹ The women who worked in mission compounds did not have the same high status as the male cooks, gardeners and mechanics. They earned less money, and were subject to much stricter rules than their male colleagues. Their work, despite its difficulties and demands, was deemed mere 'housework', and not considered as skilled as the men's tasks. Also, because of the sexual tensions that accompanied having women working for a group of celibate men, the women employed by the mission were generally not favoured in the same way as their male colleagues. An Italian Father could quite openly favour one or two special male employees, allowing them access to his quarters, buying them gifts, giving them Italian clothes and sponsoring their education, but no such favouritism was displayed towards female staff, although in reality, sexual relations between Fathers and their 'housegirls' was common.

for priests alone did not conform to the emerging ethos of Vatican Two, nor to the sense of progress and 'development' being politically espoused by President Obote, the use of the impressive term 'Domestic Science Institute' gave the 'college' an air of academic respectability.

There was a mixed curriculum of subjects, followed in a random fashion according to the needs of the Society, the parish or even the Diocese, and following the church calendar rather than the national education timetable. Young women were trained in laundry skills, cooking and needlework, all carried out to European standards, using both European and local utensils and implements to achieve these standards. Sewing machines were purchased from Italy and the students began producing church vestments, children's clothes and ornamental tablecloths. To augment the training given, and to meet the Diocese's demand for secretarial staff, type-writers were purchased and 'Typing' and 'Office Management' joined the curriculum¹². Alongside these 'domestic' and 'business' skills, the young women attended retreats and religious formation classes to prepare them for their time as fully fledged 'Lay Assistants'. In this way the patrons of the Society supported and reinforced the 'Catholic' elements of the imagined spaces created for these women.

However, the institute's popularity as a training location for young women was not matched by the Lay Assistants Society's popularity as an alternative life choice, and although young women were keen to acquire the skills and training that the college offered, they did not want to make any commitment to the Lay Assistants' Society. The qualifying criteria for 'Pedro College' was always fairly loose and informal, since Fr Pedro had intended to 'rescue' as many young women as possible. In the late 1960s, there were very few families who could afford to formally educate daughters as well as sons. Precious cash income was 'invested' in a bright son who might eventually earn enough to support his entire

¹² Eventually even knitting machines were purchased with a grant from Cebemo, the Belgian church agency, but these proved too costly to operate and maintain, and by 1994, were consigned to the Lay Assistants' store on BDSI premises, a cause of repeated friction between the school and the society.

family, whereas a daughter's education would be 'wasted' when she and her income-generating skills were transferred to another family at marriage. 'Pedro College' provided a cheap, accessible, safe alternative for parents who desired some practical education for their daughters, and which also equipped the young women with income-generating skills that could be useful in the village, the parish or in town. That the students were taught by unqualified teachers, by a transient selection of sisters, priests, senior Lay Assistants and overseas volunteers was not considered important by parents. Generally they saw the religious element to the training as a safeguarding sideline, rather than as a pivotal reason for their daughter's attendance at the college. Parents' perspectives of the imagined spaces their daughters inhabited was therefore more flexible and pragmatic than Fr Pedro's. Theirs was informed by their communal discourse of the increased material demands of a changing social structure. Influenced by the need to 'modernise' in a 'cash economy', their views were situated within and 'independent' 'developing' Ugandan discourse. The 'Catholic' elements of the opportunities at Pedro College were only part of local peoples' rationale for using it. Gradually, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a tension arose around the function of the college, and its relationship with the Lay Assistants Society. Up until 1986, every student at 'Pedro College' was in training as a Lay Assistant also, although the drop-out rate of students from the training was high.

In 1986 after the disturbances and with Bishop Drandua at the helm of the Diocese, Pedro College reopened as 'Boraja Domestic Science Institute'. Fr Pedro himself had been moved to another Comboni parish¹³. The school required extensive refurbishment¹⁴ and faced with this task, the new bishop took the opportunity to transform the institution from a Lay Assistants' Training

¹³ On the northern border with Sudan, Lodonga Parish was an appointment which carried much weight in the Diocese since it was the focus of the church's counter-Islam efforts both in the district and nationally.

¹⁴ Local people recalled the condition of the school after the disturbances: although most of the main structures remained intact, the ceilings were destroyed, walls riddled with bullet holes, windows smashed and missing, classroom furniture stolen, doors unhinged or gone, termite mounds were everywhere, typing and sewing machines were broken or stolen, materials and supplies all gone, the library lay empty, and the water tank and dormitory plumbing system were defunct ... and yet, the school had survived in better condition than most of the county's buildings. In 1993, some of these conditions remained, and were

centre to a Diocesan school for girls, to train young women in domestic science skills at secondary level. He administratively detached the school from the Lay Assistants' Society, establishing it as a Diocesan institution, with himself as Chairman of the Board of Governors.

Over several years, the school redefined its direction and purpose, adjusting to emerging discourses and developing new imagined spaces for women. Building on the ideas being developed by the parish Women's groups, the students took classes in 'Leadership and Development', which incorporated ideas of self-reliance and empowerment for women. They learned to organise themselves into committees, to conduct debates and to express their opinions well. The educational remit of the school was realigned from a missionary concept of creating alternative domestic spheres in which women would nourish Christianity and clergy, towards a more secular and academic definition of 'domestic' knowledge. This period marked the incorporation of a 'development' discourse into the imagined spaces on offer at BDSI which carried rather different terms and practices of accountability.

The first step in this process was to obtain official Government recognition of the school as a Private Secondary School. Throughout the district, and in the Diocese, the school was still often referred to as 'Pedro College', and regarded as a place where 'not-too-bright girls' went to learn and 'cook and sew for the Fathers'. The bishop and new administration were keen to upgrade this image, and to use the foundations of 'Pedro College' to build an educational alternative for young women of the Diocese who otherwise would not get a Secondary Education. Fr Pedro's ideas of 'saving' vulnerable girls from the prey of unscrupulous married men in the village were outdated by the late 1980s, but had been replaced by a similar notion of providing some practical formal education for young women to use to improve their socio-economic position at home. BDSI did not intend to produce candidates for Makerere University, but

considered as 'maintenance' problems.

aimed to train the young Christian women of the Diocese in skills that would be of benefit to the whole community. The alternative or respite that the Lay Assistants Society once offered young girls now competed with opportunities to train as nursing aides or secretaries, and given the chance to acquire 'O' level qualifications, young women from West Nile could pursue nursing or teaching careers, and could proudly boast of being 'working class'¹⁵. After some effort, BDSI was officially registered as a Private Secondary School by the Department of Education, and as such, although still under Diocesan control, had to fulfil certain basic educational criteria, and operate under Government guidelines. This involved offering places to girls who had successfully passed their Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) at the end of Primary Seven, providing certain combinations of subjects for students to take in national examinations, that a certain proportion of the staff should be professionally qualified, and that a Board of Governors should be appointed to oversee major decisions in the school. These measures further undermined the Lay Assistants' control of the institution, and as a group whose numbers were diminishing anyway, they began to feel that their position was threatened in Boraja. As the Lay Assistants attracted fewer members, they had fewer trained personnel to install in key positions of authority in BDSI.

6.4 Everyday learning at BDSI

This section describes the conditions in which BDSI's educational programme is conducted, to trace what elements of traditional missionary 'domestic' education may remain at the school, and to mark the situation of students attending the school. In the everyday life of the school, there are echoes of the patterns of the first missionary school for girls in Africa at the turn of the century. The habits and routines of the homeplace are not replicated within the school compound, where the rhythms of mission life are enacted instead. There is a strict timetable for every day of each week of each of the three school terms. The students are

¹⁵ 'Working Class' is used in West Nile in a similar way as 'Middle Class' is used in the UK, denoting in an explicit way the importance attached to being in a wage earning occupation, a social step 'above' those depending on subsistence incomes alone.

allowed to wear no jewellery or decorations, and plaiting of hair is forbidden (on the grounds that it is time wasting). 'Vernacular' is also forbidden, on the basis that 'education' is conducted through and examined in English, although in effect this measure minimises the emergence of ethnic differences between the students and is used as a disciplinary tool. These rules certainly echo the strict disciplinary codes of early mission schools, where all signs of difference, individuality and ethnicity (elements of identity) were discouraged as 'primitive'. In this way, certain 'lugbara' elements of communal discourse tend to be muted in the school, but the regular movement of staff and students between the school and their home villages means that the local ethnic identity of the school is retained in the continual flow of 'local' news, stories and information.

A remarkable degree of self-discipline exists among the students, and although this sometimes results in the bullying of younger students by the older girls, I was informed by part-time teachers in the school that even this unsavoury aspect of boarding school life was much less prevalent at BDSI than at neighbouring schools. Discipline by teachers, when enforced, is strict and harsh (to my western sensibilities)¹⁶. Students can be sent to the school fields to dig for an entire day without food, merely for speaking their vernacular language in the dormitory. However, since the students or their families are paying fees for their education, a certain standard of teaching and accommodation is expected, and the threat of student rebellion serves to temper inappropriate or excessive disciplinary measures¹⁷.

¹⁶ The entire regime of education in East Africa struck many western volunteers and observers as draconian and rigid, with harrowing reports of school strikes, harsh disciplinary measures and rigid teaching and learning methods featuring strongly in gatherings of volunteers working in education there (Fieldnotes for Moshi APSO gathering (March 1994) and VMM gatherings in Entebbe and Mwanza, April and September 1993). At these gatherings, western development workers discussed the contrast between the strict routine and discipline within school compounds and the often chaotic economic and political situations within which they operated. We felt that this resulted in a tension which made 'getting an education' (with 'good' results) extremely difficult for the children of East Africa.

¹⁷ 'Poor Feeding' was one of the most common causes of organised student strikes in Ugandan schools, and during 1994, the administration in BDSI and other schools tried to maintain at least a very basic diet for students. In February 1994, the students of Ombaci Boys' Secondary School organised a very

Facilities at the school are very basic; the dormitories are without beds in some, without windows in others, a leaky roof and with bathing and latrine facilities outdoors. Students fetch water twice daily from a borehole over a mile away, and work in the afternoons in tidying the school compound, or digging in the school fields. Food is basic too - beans and 'enya' three times a day, with sweet potatoes or boiled maize in season. Meat is an annual treat. There is no running water, electricity or solar power, and students study at night sharing kerosene lamps. They have to provide all their own stationery, soap, bedding and paraffin, on top of annual fees of 120,000ush (\$120)¹⁸. Participation in extra-curricular activities is high. Debating and Drama are popular school clubs, and the national Young Christians Society (YCS) has a branch in the school also. BDSI's YCS choir enjoys an excellent reputation throughout the Diocese¹⁹.

The first term's netball tournaments and the second term's athletic competitions are enthusiastically anticipated, and the school 'stars' pampered. Competing at county and district levels requires travelling to other venues, and in the fierce competitive atmosphere of these meets, the presence of BDSI, (the smallest secondary school in the region and often the subject of ridicule because of this) was marked by the quality of its 'students' performance and behaviour. When I asked whether the school's sporting success was very significant, the comparison with Ombaci in Arua (considered the best boys' secondary school in

thorough and well planned strike, eventually parading their Headmaster through Arua town, to the door of the District Education Office, demanding a replacement. Word of the strike swept through West Nile, and teachers became anxious that copy-cat striking would occur. However, because of the particular nature of the grievances at Ombaci, no other school could claim the same grounds for striking, and schools in the district remained quiet. At BDSI, because of the small number of students and the close proximity of staff, grievances were generally aired early on, and disruptive situations were quelled.

¹⁸ Prizes at the annual prize-giving ceremony are pragmatically, soap, fabric, paraffin and exercise books.

¹⁹ The girls were often called upon to serve at local functions, and their reputation as a choir won them invitations to perform throughout the county. When President Museveni visited Boraja in April 1993, the students of BDSI were requested by the Organising Committee to act as Servers, and to provide entertainment. Their performance won warm personal praise from the President himself, and did not go unnoticed by District Education administrators, who noted that the tiny Diocesan 'Domestic' had so impressed the President.

the region, it once ranked second in Uganda for examination success) was invariably made in response : “Ombaci’s reputation was made in football when it was only a missionary technical school, and yet now those boys come even from Kampala to attend” (Amaniyo Rosa, diary notes April 1993), and “Sporting success is only the start of every success for a school. We can organise like Ombaci!”(Aniku John, notebook March 1994).

Students would often walk over twenty miles to reach school, heavily loaded with all their bedding and possessions for the term. As such, this was typical student life in West Nile and in much of rural Uganda, whether attending mission or government schools. BDSI was much smaller and more intimate than local government secondary schools, the location was pleasant and the conditions comparably better than other schools in the country which attracted government funding.

The removal of young people from their homes to boarding schools was considered 'normal' and even desirable by the parents and families who prized formal educational qualifications as a guarantor of a prosperous future, although as Odora (1993) stressed, this removal of family labour destabilised the fundamental life patterns of villages. However, it was a 'development' agenda that now removed young people from the patterns of village life rather than a missionary, 'Catholic' agenda. 'Being educated' was a goal shared by parents and pupils alike, and pursued as funds allowed, while untrained teachers instructed pupils in learning by rote in order to pass British standard examinations. It was widely accepted that young women who wanted to be 'educated' should, for the length of time that education took to complete, 'remove herself' from the practices of village life which might threaten her education. In this way, 'serious' girls were discouraged from having boyfriends. Pregnancy was viewed as the self-inflicted and careless ending to an education, and was frowned upon, especially when a family had invested financially in a girl's education and would now never realise any profit from this investment. None of

the female staff or students at BDSI ever expressed any sense that their formal education was extracting too high a price. The education discourse in Boraja and West Nile was not contintized by Freiran perspectives which fundamentally question the process of formal education. The language of education was in terms of examination success, and to attain this, schools maintained many of the codes which were first introduced in mission and colonial schools.

The rigid order of school life was often not reflected in national life outside the school compound. In Boraja the routine and formal restrictions of school and mission life are set within a broader existence of national instability. Although there is 'peace' in Uganda as a nation, West Nile and the north are destabilised by the activities of rebel forces and by the spillover of the conflict in Southern Sudan. These conditions, and the national organisation of political stability determine the ultimate 'timetable' of student life and village life²⁰

6.4.1 Reconsidering Domestic

Whereas analysis of the domestic education agenda pursued for young women in the west and in mission territories has emphasised the inegalitarian and subordinate nature of this type of knowledge and work (Robert 1996, Odora 1993, WGSF 1994), in Boraja I found that it was the special 'Domestic' nature of the school's curriculum which is offering most potential for the school's 'development' agenda. For many years NGOs and government agencies have been bemoaning the tendency towards overeducating too many young people in the formal and professional sectors, leaving the

²⁰ The Ministry of education announced the term dates for schools throughout the country, and these had to coincide with certain political events. National elections to elect a Constituent Assembly were announced late in 1993, so schools started back early after Christmas, to break up a week before the election date. This was to allow students over the age of 18 to vote in their home places, and also to keep large scale movements of people to a minimum at election time. This may have suited the government's electoral calendar, but it did not suit the school administration, who needed the holiday period for planning, repairs, sourcing food and material for the next term etc. Also, students tended not to come back at the earlier time, but to stick to the usual return date, when they had collected enough fees. Therefore, two or three weeks of teaching time were lost. The rescheduling of term dates also caused havoc with sports fixtures, and BDSI missed the first rounds of the district netball competitions because not enough team members had returned after the holidays.

practical, vocational needs of the country unattended²¹. Not only are there not enough people trained in dressmaking, but there are not enough teachers of the subject. Furthermore, standards of hygiene and nutrition throughout the country are poor (see Jitta *et al* 1992), and exacerbating health problems (W.B.S.S.S. 1993), but there are not enough teachers of Food and Nutrition and Home Management to educate schoolchildren in the basic principles of these subjects. So, an institution like BDSI, with firm foundations and facilities in these specialities could become a focus of training in the field of Domestic Sciences. The administration is already negotiating with the District Education Office about providing an A-level syllabus in Domestic Science, since very few schools were 'feeding' candidates to the established course at Makerere at this level - and none of these are in northern Uganda. 'Vocational Training' has become the 'buzz word' in funding applications, and vocational training aimed at women is considered doubly well-placed to meet the needs of the nation. BDSI has an established reputation in the Domestic Sciences and is now using this identity to attract funding to help run the school²².

BDSI's strength therefore lies in its specialist subjects *in* Domestic Science. In academic terms, this topic involves the three subjects of Clothing and Textiles (Sewing), Food and Nutrition (Cooking) and Home Management (Hygiene), and students sit the UNEB examination in these subjects. These subjects emphasise the old missionary connection between 'cleanliness and Godliness', although with the contemporary 'scientific spin' of health and hygiene issues. Although the school charges tuition fees, it cannot charge as much as other secondary schools because parents still consider it a second-class institution, and few would choose to pay high fees to educate a daughter there. Figure 6.2 illustrates the school's funding difficulties well. The estimated income from fees for

²¹ Aiming to address this, the 1992 MoES White Paper recommended that schooling be strongly oriented towards career preparation for students, with 'pre-vocational' preparatory courses to be taught in upper primary school, and technical vocational courses in Secondary schools.

²² During the course of 1994, several applications were made from BDSI. In a few of these, the school was listed as 'Boraja Domestic Science Vocational Institute' because 'vocational' had been prominent in the information from the funding agency about the projects it preferred to allocate funding to.

1994/5 is 9,430,000 ush set against modestly estimated running costs of 15,593,800 ush. The income from fees would just about cover the salaries and wages of school staff, but as the financial report for 1993/4 makes clear (figure 6.3), in practice only a portion of fees actually are paid, and only a proportion of salaries are paid as a result.

Secondly, as a private school, BDSI receives no funding from the government at all, either for teachers' salaries, materials, buildings or equipment. In establishing its Domestic Science curriculum, the school desperately requires specialist teachers in the Domestic Science subjects. Since no other school in the District offers these subjects, there are very few qualified teachers available to teach. Those available locally are untrained, and the one qualified teacher who does teach at BDSI is uncommitted and ineffectual. However, since her input is essential, her unreliable teaching record is tolerated. This problem is often discussed among the administration, and was brought before the Board of Governors in guarded language in the annual report of 1994 but remains unresolved.

Supporting this core curriculum are the basic subjects in English, Mathematics, and Religious Education, which are necessary to obtain an 'O' level certificate, supplemented by optional subjects in Accounting, Office Practice, Typing, History, Geography, Agriculture and Biology, depending on the teaching qualifications held by the part-time teachers in the school²³. This represents a much broader educational base than had first been envisioned for the school, and leaves no room on the timetable for non-examination subjects like 'Leadership and Training'. This is regretted by the Lay Assistants who still teach at the school, and still hold 'formation' as a central tenet of the school's aims, alongside academic attainment. The rationale behind expanding the subject base has been to allow students to take examinations in subjects that feature in the 'A' level

Figure 6.1 shows an extract from one such funding proposal.

²³ These subjects were taken by teachers who worked full time at local Secondary Schools, and part-time at BDSI. Their commitment to BDSI was intermittent, and absenteeism was very high among all teachers.

combinations that follow on from 'O' level. In recent years, certain students have attained grades good enough to win them places at an 'A' level school, but have not had the correct combination of subjects to fit any course. So, the school is trying to steer the curriculum in the direction of making further progress possible for the more academically able students.

This progress towards improved 'O' level provision, and 'A' level status leaves behind the less able students, sent to BDSI to learn practical skills. The administration is presently trying to find the right balance between responding to the ever-present demand for vocational training for young women of the District, and improving the school's academic record, and therefore chances of educational survival. In 1994, the Lay Assistants could offer only a Bursar to assist with school administration, and since she also occupied several committee roles in the Society, she was proving unreliable (see section 6.5.3 below).

Only the steadfast commitment and work of the school administration have kept the school functioning, even improving. Together, the headmistress and deputy (before myself) investigated sources of funding overseas to re-establish the school's equipment. They planned the introduction of the official Ugandan National Education Board's (UNEB) examination system, and by 1994, the S4 students at the school are sitting UNEB 'O' level examinations in its core and specialist subjects. During 1993, money was found to build bathing shelters, a new teaching block and latrines, private funding was found to restock the library with modern text books, while sewing machines and typewriters were bought and maintained.

The constant struggle of running the school (made clear in the 1994 annual report, part of which is illustrated as Figure 6.4) is testimony to the appreciation of the administration for the 'Domestic' they inherit, but in anticipation of an empowering 'Domestic' for the future.

6.4.2 Paternalism lost

Within the school, it is seldom mentioned that one of the main objectives of the school's establishment had been to staff the Priests' houses of the Diocese with appropriately trained housegirls. By the 1990s, this seemed a curious rationale for a school to have, and the notions of 'development' have so thoroughly permeated the institutions of the Diocese that outmoded initiatives of the past are considered best forgotten. Also, among the Ugandans still connected with the school, there is the sense that it would be disloyal to bring up this slightly suspect educational agenda, since Fr Pedro has devoted so much time and energy to the school, and was still a prominent missionary priest of the Diocese. Among Lay Assistants, who by and large are now past the age of marrying as wives, there is fierce loyalty towards Pedro, who still pampers them with gifts from Italy, free goods from 'Dom Vittorio'²⁴ in Kampala, and who lodges project proposals on their behalf. Perhaps the only people who lament the new direction the school is taking, participating in so many mainstream educational events, and detaching itself from the Lay Assistants' Society, are Fr Pedro and the senior Lay Assistants themselves. In careful conversation with Fr Pedro in Lodonga one day in March 1994, I mentioned that the headmistress had left the school to go to work in the Diocese.

"Ah, that is the doing of the bishop and Fellini. She should stay at Domestic. She is needed there." he said, later making no attempt to disguise his dislike of the woman appointed to succeed her, who was not a Lay Assistant. When I pointed out that the bishop had little choice, since the Government required that the school have properly qualified teachers...

" These requirements of the government ! What are they? These girls at

²⁴ 'Dom Vittorio' was quite a living legend in east African mission communities. He was an Italian brother who spent half of his time in Italy, persuading Italian companies to donate cash and goods to 'the missions', and the rest of his time in Africa distributing the donations. It was a paternalistic one-man-show which remained as an anachronism in contemporary missionary activity. Representatives of mission communities would travel to his place in Kampala and petition him for furniture, bedding, food, and electrical equipment. There was no formal request or donation procedure, and allocation of the goods was completely at Dom Vittorio's own discretion. By 1993, the community of Comboni sisters in Arua had decided to stop asking him for donations, since there was considerable doubt about the legitimacy of his goods, and they thought it demeaning to have to 'beg' at his 'court'. Other mission communities continued to petition him. In our first year at Boraja, we received supplies of pasta, soap, olive oil and tinned fruit from a Comboni priest who travelled regularly to see Dom Vittorio.

Domestic are not needing such teachers, they should not be doing these examinations anyway. If they wanted examinations, let them go to these other schools! And anyway, these Domestic subjects they are easy to teach. I myself, I taught cooking and what what. I was a good teacher ! (laughs)"

He also went on to say " .. and what about these girls from deep in the village who have not completed P.7.? Where can they go now, if Domestic is getting so 'nice' ? They are still just remaining in the village, and what choices have they got now?"

In this observation, Fr Pedro highlighted one consequence of the school's new drive to improve standards for its existing enrolment. In meeting the basic criteria set down by the Department of Education, young girls who do not get the chance to complete their primary education, are excluded from "even Domestic". Where the school had once offered a chance of some training to such disadvantaged girls, that chance is now gone.

The original missionary model of BDSI, bound up with the Lay Assistants' Society, had embraced a loose salvific model of 'improvement' for young women, at a time when very few had the chance of formal education anyway. It provided a new alternative imagined space for those who had demonstrated ability, and those who were less academically inclined. While serving the staffing requirements of the Diocesan Priests' houses, the original institutions created by Fr Pedro also provided a 'spiritual sanctuary' away from the temptations and dangers of immoral men in the village. All these different agendas were served in Pedro's singular vision.

Now, the educational and developmental function of the school has become paramount. Roles are defined and distinct, and the imagined spaces of Lay Assistants and students are being explored. The school is following developmental criteria set out by Government and secular interests, although these now closely match the Diocese's own educational programme. There is no room for idiosyncratic guidance of the school in this formatted developmental agenda; there is no room for a Fr Pedro. In one sense the school has outgrown Fr

Pedro and the Lay Assistants in the same way as the Diocese has outgrown the influence of the Verona Fathers, but this has also meant that some of the small details that Pedro could accommodate, within his set imagined space for African women, go unseen and neglected by the streamlined school administration. The following example, taken from fieldnotes from April 1993 demonstrates this point.

"Today, a young woman in a wheelchair was brought to the school (with considerable difficulty) by her uncle. They had come to see if she could join the school, in either the Domestic or the Business section. Susan and Rosa both spoke to the girl and the uncle, and basically told them that the school could not accommodate a disabled student. Later, they were in the staffroom laughing at the nerve of the girl to come to the school and expect admittance. When I enquired exactly why they had refused her, they explained that the school's verandas, classrooms and dormitories were all up and down steps, that the latrines were in an inaccessible place, and that it would be a great burden to her fellow students to take care of her. It seemed harsh to me. Later, I reflected that Fr Pedro, in his single-minded, paternalistic and essentially kind-hearted way, would have accepted the student. A few letters to generous donors in his home parish in southern Italy would yield the funds to construct the few cement ramps and paths that would have made an education at BDSI a possibility for the girl. Susan would have had to 'write a project' to attract such funding, wouldn't have known which particular agency to approach, or whether this case would fall into their 'development' criteria. The money to construct ramps simply does not exist in the school's budget, which is a disaster already."

Ugandan women in charge of the school, gearing it towards the mainstream, cannot afford to consider marginalised cases in the same way as Pedro could. Therefore, in his paternalistic and set way, Pedro could be accommodating and flexible of someone marginalised who could fit into his 'Catholic' imagined space for her, whereas in their embrace of women exploring their imagined spaces through educational and 'development' opportunities, the new school administration must be rigid and fixed.

6.5 Imagined Spaces for educating women

In this section of the chapter, I reflect on particular figures located within the BDSI/Lay Assistants compound, and consider what their situation may represent in the terms of the endeavour to educate young women. This section explores conceptually some of the 'imagined spaces' that these figures occupy, and tests the boundaries of 'accountability' as some of the women experience them. I consider three 'figures', all of whom featured in the communal discourse within the compound to a considerable degree in 1993 and 1994. The first of these is not a person, but a monument. The Lourdes grotto in the compound is central to how the school is seen, and it occupies an important imagined space beyond the stones, cement, paint and plaster that it embodies. I also consider the situation of one particular student, and of one Lay Assistant, to illustrate how, in transgressing the boundaries set up within the school, they negotiate new imagined spaces in the mission and in the village.

6.5.1 The Grotto

The classrooms, kitchen, offices and dormitories of BDSI comprise four sides of a quadrangle arranged around an open grassy central square which has small patches of flowers, trimmed thorn hedges and footpaths criss-crossing the area. Prominently situated in the north-eastern quarter of the square is a large grotto, which has a plaster figure of the Virgin Mary perched high in the rockery, and a large fresco of the 'Annunciation' underneath²⁵. This grotto was erected by Fr Angelo who was parish priest in Boraja in the 1970s, a centrepiece for the school and a place to compete with the 'shrines' of local ancestor worshippers. The construction of the grotto has entered local lore : "It took 200 bags of cement to fix those stones" and "He sent directly to Italy for seedlings of those flowers, to make it beautiful," are quoted whenever visitors admire the grotto. It was constructed before the disturbances, and its intact survival was taken as evidence of its holy place in the mission. The female figures represented in the

²⁵ The annunciation is an important Marian occasion in the Catholic calendar. Celebrated on December 8th, the feast commemorates the moment when the angel Gabriel appeared to the virgin Mary, telling her that she was to bear the son of God, to which she acquiesced.

grotto are slim, serene, white, and clothed in long flowing robes. The grotto is carefully tended by the students of the school assigned to 'Gardening Duty', who clean the statues and weed the flowerbeds. It is in a central position, passed by whoever crosses the school compound to visit the Lay Assistants. Occasionally, an open-air school mass is celebrated in front of the grotto, and it is the place where students like to pose for photographs.

For me, the grotto represents the contested imagined spaces which the institutions contain. First, consider the scene depicted. It is not an 'inculturated' piece of catholic iconography; in both scenes the Virgin Mary is devoutly praying, hands pressed together, eyes heavenward. Her depiction echoes the traditional catholic imagined spaces made available to women as elevated, asexual and inspirational, or servile and naive. Both representations are virginal, before and after the birth of Christ. This is not Mary of the Magnificat, nor is she vibrant, colourful, noisy or black (like many of the women who surround her here in Boraja). These representative images of Mary are set in the 'traditional' catholic western construction of femininity and womanhood, contrasting with the reality of African Christian women.

Secondly, how did it come to be there, and what does it mean to represent? It was constructed by a male missionary member of the catholic priesthood from local stones and cement, but decorated and given meaning by imported flowers and statues. The cost of constructing this grotto was incongruous with the daily needs and sufferings of local people. It was constructed as an example for local women and girls to admire and draw inspiration from, a sign of European and Christian wealth and beauty.

Furthermore, the site of the grotto, in the central open square of the school, is also a contested space in the 'development' of the school. It is the most 'obvious' site for the construction of the new classroom block, for which funds were being sought in 1994. With four sides of the school compound already built, the

erection of a small block within the central (unsheltered and 'empty') area seemed sensible, although this would involve moving the grotto. However, the Headmistress did not dare even suggest to the Board of Governors or the Lay Assistants that the grotto should be relocated. When submitting a funding proposal to an overseas church aid agency, a plan of the school was necessary. I drew the plan, and asked her how to mark the grotto on the site. She laughed, and instructed me to omit the grotto from the plan, inserting a tree in its place, explaining "This is a plan for 'developing' the girls, so they do not need to know about our neighbours (the Lay Assistants) or about these old fashioned holy statues. And these agencies, they don't like us to cut down trees either" (See Figure 6.5).

While this bureaucratic denial of the grotto was considered justifiable, neither she nor other staff members felt comfortable about the prospect of demolishing the grotto for removal elsewhere. Such a measure would have been considered 'bad luck', as if 'Christian' superstitions had grown around this monument which was testimony to a faith beyond superstition. The comments of the headmistress also demonstrate her accurate insight into how outsiders view her situation, and how she can manipulate that knowledge to suit less 'explainable' demands operating upon her.

In this way, the grotto is an obstacle to the 'logical' development of the school as viewed by outsiders. It occupies space that is required for 'development'. However, the space has become a significant and holy place in the collective discourse of the mission community. Its presence is celebrated and denied as suits the cause and requirements of the users of the compound, in a flexible and pragmatic way. Although the grotto represents an ideology of a missionary past to 'enlightened' post-Vatican II Catholics, it also represents a 'holy place' that has survived the troubles that destroyed much of what was permanent in Boraja to local people, and as such has accrued a superstitious 'lugbara' hybrid meaning. So, although outwardly the grotto represents the undesirable face of missionary

presence and images for women, it has also taken on its own local mission meaning, which has little to do with what the stones and plaster depict.

6.5.2 The Student

The second figure to represent the imagined spaces occupied within the school compound is Ojaku Knight, who in 1994 represented the type of student who satisfied both Pedro and the new administration's vision for the school. The following account of her departure from the school is taken from my fieldnotes for June 1994.

Ojaku Knight is seventeen years old, and one of the brightest students in the S.1. class at BDSI. Her father is dead, and her mother works at the Priests' House at Ladonga, a mission parish some miles north of Boraja. She has elder and younger brothers, and her mother receives help from the Parish to pay Ojaku's fees to attend BDSI. The family had lived at Ladonga since returning from exile in Zaire in 1988, and are a 'Mission Family' of Ladonga parish.

" June 17th, What A Day !! Ojaku Knight has disappeared from school today, and a nurse came from the hospital saying that a midwife there has recently confirmed that she is pregnant. Rosa was frantic to locate Ojaku, since her whereabouts and safety are the school's responsibility during term time. Other Lodonga students, Amia and Bako refused to volunteer any information about her whereabouts, so Rosa and I borrowed a vehicle to go to her home to see if she was there. Desperate journey. Ojaku's mother ran into the bush when she heard that we were coming, thinking that we'd come to tell her that Ojaku was dead, and she has no idea of Ojaku's condition or location. It was a distressing visit. On our return to Boraja tonight, we learned that Ojaku is here! She's in the house of 'mission boy', Cici, and his wife, who works in the hospital²⁶."

²⁶ What is a Mission Boy ? It often happened that certain foreign priests or brothers at mission parishes would "adopt" young boys who had few family connections as a result of war, drought or famine. The boys would live in the Fathers' Quarters and do oddjobs around the parish. They were often dressed in smart European clothes, and were able to travel in the priests' vehicles. They were utterly devoted to the priests, upon whom they became very dependent. It did not automatically follow that the priests sent these boys to school, and those I knew, had little formal education. Instead, they became adept at the parish's plumbing, wiring or gardening. As the boys matured into men, the priests became anxious that they should enter good catholic marriages to local girls, and often helped arrange this. So, as there are fewer missionary priests in parishes, the number of young mission boys has decreased. Those who remain are now grown men. Sometimes, the mission boys find it difficult to adapt to normal family life, and the hard work of digging, cultivating and supporting a family. They miss mission life, and drift back to the parish, seeking payment for the oddjobs they perform. Local people view these mission boys with a mixture of contempt and pity. They consider their inflated egos to be the result of pampering by the foreign priests, but understand that an ordinary hard life is difficult for them. These boys and

"June 18th/19th : Ojaku has been returned to the care of Rosa, and it seems that the father of the baby is another 'mission boy' from Ladonga, whom she met because her mother was working in the parish there. This 'Boy Dino' is a friend of Cici, and Cici is presently negotiating to arrange for Ojaku to travel to Arua to stay with Boy Dino, as his second wife !"

This transgressed the normal traditional negotiation rituals, since Cici is a relative of neither Ojaku nor Boy Dino, and the arrangements, if any, should all be carried out through Ojaku's brothers and uncles.

"Cici returned from Arua with a letter for Ojaku from Boy Dino, who incidentally is in his late 30s, married with waines. In the letter, he lists all the reasons why *he* is suffering because of Ojaku's condition, and how *she* is ruining *him*... He had already sent her money to buy drugs to try and induce an abortion (the attempt failed), and now fed up, he apparently has no option but to commit suicide.... She should now have the baby in remembrance of him, and raise the child in his memory! Thus, Boy Dino has washed his hands of all responsibility for Ojaku, and broken hearted, she has now reluctantly returned to her irate mother to await the birth of the child. Poor girl."

This narrative illustrates how complex the ties that bind women to mission practices and projects of the past and present are. Ojaku is the youngest daughter of a family which has had to draw on mission support because of circumstances which have deprived them of clan support. Since her father died in the disturbances, her mother did not become his brother's wife since families and clans were dislocated, in refugee and transit camps. The support her mother met was from the missionaries, for whom she still works. Under their influence, she has hopes for Ojaku which she never entertained for herself, beyond the village. With the help of the missionary priests at the parish, Ojaku, who is bright and pretty, was educated at primary and BDSI. However, it was this very proximity to the mission place, where mission boys inhabit social spaces which are both lugbara and church-dependent, that sealed Ojaku's fate in the way her mother dreaded. The mission boy, Boy Dino spent time away from his wife and family in Arua with his 'other family' at the mission in Ladonga, where he met Ojaku.

men inhabit contested social spaces which are also defined by their gender, and are straddling lugbara and missionary traditions and practices.

There, neither were surrounded by the networks of extended family which police encounters between young people. In the vague mission place, Boy Dino was assumed to be behaving as a good 'Catholic' husband and 'mission boy', and Ojaku assumed to be a 'serious student', not easily distracted.

Back at BDSI and finding that she was pregnant, Ojaku realised that she could no longer fulfil her mother's dreams, that her formal education was at an end; an entire alternative life pattern closed off to her, since admission to the same school is forbidden and the fees for other schools are beyond her means. Seeing this and in distress, she fled the school. Since she excluded herself from what the school makes possible, she had to physically exclude herself from the school itself. Her disappearance from the school is therefore symbolic of her departure from the imagined space it offers.

Ojaku's situation illustrates how the practice of one missionary generation may permeate another, and also how local people with long association with the mission encounter difficulty in addressing adversity, since they occupy imagined spaces other than the clearer distinctions of the village and the mission places. Ojaku's mission background makes it more likely for her to attend BDSI and to adopt the imagined space on offer to young women there. However, despite working within the 'development' opportunities BDSI offered, she also retained some of her 'lugbara' practices. In choosing to have a relationship with Boy Dino she is testing the boundaries of accountability of the BDSI imagined space.

Since he is a man who has been married in church, she is assuming an 'Eve' or 'Mary Magdalene' dimension, and is contesting her 'Catholic' terms of accountability. By risking her continued education, she contests her 'development' boundaries and does not behave in an 'empowering' way. In falling pregnant, her personal and private testing of the boundaries of her space becomes public, and the communal discourse sets the grounds for her removal

from the BDSI imagined space. She returns to her mission home to construct a new imagined space, with different 'development', 'Catholic' and 'lugbara' signifiers. In lugbara terms, her new role as a young mother (possibly as a second wife to Boy Dino) is compromised, but nonetheless elevated. In 'Catholic' terms, she is both 'Eve' and victim, while the 'development' discourse would consider her return to her home as a removal from 'modern' educational and health facilities, a step 'backwards' towards 'invisibility'.

In this way, Ojaku demonstrates how the religious setting of both mission places she inhabits has structured imagined spaces for her to occupy that are not yet sexual. In choosing to assert her sexual identity she places herself at risk of being removed from these spaces - which indeed happens. Her case illustrates how the boundaries of accountability come into play only when they are transgressed by an individual's actions which become public and part of the communal discourse.

6.5.3 The Lay Assistant

The third narrative of this section refers to the situation of one of the leading Lay Assistants in Boraja, a woman called Ayakaka Lucy. The following description is drawn from diary and fieldnotes for 1993 and 1994.

"Ayakaka Lucy is a Lugbara woman in her mid 30s, who has been a Lay Assistant for many years. She has received training in Business Administration, Accounts and Office Practice, and has been teaching these subjects at BDSI for a few years, while leading the Lay Assistants' community in Boraja. It is widely known that Lucy has a boyfriend, who often comes to stay at the Lay Assistants' house, and Lucy visits him at his family compound also. She introduces him as her 'Business Partner', and indeed he buys and sells occasional crates of soda for her.

Lucy was appointed school Bursar in 1993, and was therefore in charge of monies coming into and leaving the school. During that year, there were frequent disagreements about her performance, usually based on the fact that money was regularly disappearing from the school account. She only attended the school irregularly, and spent a considerable amount of time with her boyfriend, on the pretence of being on Lay

Assistant business in town. Even when caught out lying, the school administration never threatened any corrective action, because the Lay Assistants were adamant that at least one of their members should still administratively be involved with the school. Besides, an accusation of stealing was so fraught with responsibility, that only a thief caught red-handed would ever be openly accused.

The boyfriend is nicknamed 'the Brief man' because he is slight in appearance, and because his visits to Boraja were rather clandestine and hurried. Local people speculate about whether they would marry or not, because neither is young. It is suspected that Lucy is anxious to marry, and that she spends the school's money on him and his family, but that the Brief man enjoys his freedom. Furthermore, he is an only son, and his mother has apparently declared that he will never marry Ayakaka, since it is 'obvious' she cannot bear children.

When I asked how they expect proof of her fertility when she is still officially a Lay Assistant, and indeed, Chairwoman of the Society, several local women related the entire medical history of Lucy's several hospital operations over the past ten years. Whether true or not, it is widely believed that Lucy has been rendered infertile after several operations to attend to 'women's problems', and that this is why she has not conceived yet, and why the Brief man will not marry her. Local people reasoned that Lucy's best option in life is therefore to remain a Lay Assistant.

In mid 1994, news reached Boraja that the Brief man had taken a wife, a young girl who was working as housegirl for the young buganda doctors in the hospital, and whom his mother approved of. She quickly became pregnant. Ayakaka Lucy was distraught for some time, in fact until the Brief man's clandestine visits resumed a few months later. All this time, Fr Pedro was encouraging her to remain with the Society, which was the most secure home she had known."

The case of Ayakaka Lucy illustrates how the careful negotiation of new imagined spaces by 'mission girls' such as Lucy can be fraught with pain and compromise. While her reasons for entering the Lay Assistants community were similar to other Lay Assistants, her reasons for staying are different. Having occupied a social space of opportunity in which she attained educational qualifications and enjoyed the material benefits of close association with the missionaries, her space has become contested as she tries to renegotiate the terms of her exclusion from the imagined space that lugbara women occupy in

'the village'. By having a boyfriend, she is 'on the first rung' of the ladder leading out of the Lay Assistants community, back to the imagined space where she can be wife and mother.

However, by virtue of the public life she leads as a Lay Assistant, her medical history is common knowledge, and it is believed inside and outside the mission place that she is infertile. That this knowledge precedes her possible return to the village with the Brief man is a cruel consequence of her privileged life 'in community', where not only did she receive medical treatment that ordinary women might not receive, but where the details of this privilege were made public. So while the imagined space of a Lay Assistant is characterised by access to modern healthcare and 'education', it is a space that is very public. The communal discourse informing the boundaries of the imagined space spring from 'living in community' with little personal privacy. The 'development' and 'Catholic' elements of this space would attribute less significance to infertility than the 'lugbara' element, which would rather this knowledge remained private. Whether she is infertile or not, the fact that she is considered to be alters her status among others. The brief man's family (and mother in particular) dismiss her primarily on these grounds, although they were reportedly unhappy that she lived a 'strange' quasi-religious life with loyalties to other 'top table' people like herself. Her Lay Assistant imagined space is quite unlike the spaces they occupy, and with few 'lugbara' cultural signifiers to define it explicitly, they do not understand it.

Her presumed infertility devalues her in their eyes, and on these grounds, they place more pressure on the Brief man to take a younger wife. That he capitulated to this pressure is widely understood by local people within and without the mission, and there was also sincere sympathy for Ayakaka Lucy when he married. Her presumed infertility secures her place with the Lay Assistants, since she is unlikely to leave because of pregnancy, and therefore the balance of staying and leaving the community is altered.

Although their relationship was always portrayed as non-sexual, and although Ayakaka presented an image of being among the most dedicated of Lay Assistants, this facade was part of the individual courtship rites which they engaged in. Neither could risk any display of open commitment, as they kept their options open in their 'official' spaces. Ayakaka's discursive repertoire may have accommodated sexual activity in her imagined space, but it was important that the dominant communal discourse only referred to her assumed celibacy. When the Brief man married, Ayakaka had to confront the reality that she would never be his first wife, and perhaps never be married, traditionally or sacramentally.

Her choices have become limited, and the imagined space she occupies is more firmly located in the mission sphere than before he married. The Brief man's marriage reduced the fluidity, choice and testing of boundaries which she exercised while their relationship only threatened her position among the Lay Assistants. It is likely that she would transgress the boundaries of 'Catholic' accountability in her imagined space by becoming pregnant. However, that their relationship resumed after his marriage surprised local people, who recognised with compassion that their attachment was emotionally strong, and on these grounds, they publicly speculated that Ayakaka may still leave the Lay Assistants to live with the Brief Man, especially in the face of the society's own decline²⁷.

An issue which informs this analysis of Ayakaka's negotiated and unresolved imagined space is the way in which her position of financial responsibility (held partly because of the unresolved relationship between the Lay Assistants and the

²⁷ The membership of the Society was ageing, the eldest member now in her late 40s, and the majority of members in their 30s. Most had received formal training in Kampala or in Italy, in tailoring, administration, teaching or childcare, and a significant number of the remaining membership were Alur by tribe. It happened quite often that the splits in communities, when one group would refuse to cook, eat or talk with another, occurred along tribal lines, and Pedro or the bishop often had to intervene by staging a 'Reconciliation Retreat', to reunite the

school) played a role in her relationship, and therefore, the impact that this relationship had upon the school. By using school funds to entertain the Brief man and materially indulge his family, Ayakaka was proving to them that her position among the 'top table' people had material benefits. She used her Lay Assistant position in the school to lever and secure the 'other' social position she aspired towards, as the Brief man's wife. In terms of the choices and sacrifices she made throughout her life to date, this seemed a simple 'trade-off' of one position in anticipation of another. She cannily knew that even though her actions in the school may be uncovered, nobody in the school, in the Society or in the diocese would openly accuse her of theft, since the evidence would be difficult to find. In terms of how the school managed its budget and struggled to make ends meet, the relationship between Ayakaka Lucy and the Brief man deprived the school of essential funds, and in everyday terms, meant that salaries went unpaid and that the students ate less maize. This brings me to the final section of the chapter, where I discuss such matters of accountability and ownership, and how the complex negotiated spaces being occupied within the BDSI and Lay Assistant compound have direct and indirect impact upon the 'education' which takes place there.

6.6 Accountability and ownership

In this chapter, I discuss accountability in its material, financial context, alongside its cultural and religious meanings. In terms of the management of development project funds, the 'accounting' that takes place at BDSI is closely linked to the issue of 'ownership' in relation to the Lay Assistants.

6.6.1 Ambiguous Ownership

To soften the blow of removing the school from exclusive Lay Assistant control, in 1986 Bishop Drandua allowed the notion that they still 'owned' the school to remain. Anxious not to antagonise Fr Pedro, or the Lay Assistants themselves, he emphasised that the school should be run by the Lay Assistants, that it should

groups (as in June 1994).

continue to train Lay Assistants, but that students could attend who were not intending to join the Society. The Society's 'Mother House' still shared the school compound in Boraja, and project proposals in the joint names of the Society and the school still plied their way to Europe. So there was considerable ambiguity about the management of the school, which was not contentious as long as the bishop was 'boss' of both the Society and the school, and as long as a Lay Assistant was Headmistress of the school. In 1993, the latter situation changed.

In 1990, the senior Lay Assistant, Miss. Susan Ajiko, became Headmistress of BDSI. Susan was in the unusual position of fully backing the school's progress towards offering a better educational service to young women of the Diocese, and of also keeping the interests of the Lay Assistants Society satisfied. She had not completed her own teacher training, and as such, had to be supported by a fully qualified secondary school teacher, as deputy Headmistress in order to satisfy the requirements of the Department of Education. The bishop 'headhunted' Miss. Amaniyo Rosa, a recently qualified young teacher from Terego for the job, and she came rather unwillingly to teach and live in Boraja in 1992. She felt obliged to undertake the unappealing job of being the first Ugandan secular teacher to be involved in running 'Pedro College', since the bishop had personally sponsored her own education through secondary school. Just as much as she dreaded running the 'Lay Assistants' School', the Lay Assistants were displeased to see an Outsider in the school administration. Still, since none of their members had remained Lay Assistants long enough to become fully qualified teachers, they could offer no alternative.

In 1993, during the annual meeting of the school's Board of Governors, the Bishop unexpectedly announced that Susan Ajiko was to be appointed to the Diocesan post of Lay Apostolate Co-ordinator. While this was immediately recognised as an enormous boost for Susan and for the women of the diocese, the announcement threw the Lay Assistants' Society and the school

administration into disarray. The obvious choice to replace Susan as Headmistress was Amaniyo Rosa, and the bishop publicly recommended her for the role. She was stunned at the combined news of Susan's departure and of her own 'promotion' and remained silent during the consternation that arose in the meeting. The Lay Assistants were alarmed at the prospect of their losing all control of the school. Not only were they 'losing' Susan from their Boraja community, but they had no 'internal candidate' for the position of Headmistress or deputy, and therefore had no role in the school administration. The bishop further recommended that I step in as deputy headmistress, while a suitable candidate from the Lay Assistants was identified²⁸.

The Lay Assistants' 'ownership' of the school was brought more into question when it was threatened in this way. While the bishop and the Board of Governors were happy to speak platitudes in meetings and to reassure the beleaguered Lay Assistants that their position was as secure as ever, in reality, they had increasingly less to do with the way in which the school operated. Until they were in a position to offer trained and committed staff to undertake teaching and administrative duties within the school, these roles would have to go to 'Outsiders'.

Meanwhile, the notion of 'ownership', enduringly undefined and vague, meant that the Lay Assistants could treat the school, the students, the buildings and their contents as their own. Often, students would be removed from class by Lay Assistants to perform some Domestic task in preparation for a Lay Assistants' committee meeting, tables, benches and chairs would be taken and not returned for the same reason, and teachers' houses occupied by members of the Society were in disagreement with the rest of the community. The school administration generally tolerated these liberties rather than confront the issue of 'ownership', and doggedly tried to keep track of the school's belongings.

²⁸ My reaction to this unexpected turn of events and the impact these changes had upon my fieldwork are discussed in the chapter 3.

6.6.1.a Relocating Vero

The following sequence of events demonstrates further how the Lay Assistants and the school were part of a complicated series of 'trade-offs' which the bishop employed in his management of diocesan institutions. The case of Etoru Vero's departure from BDSI illustrates starkly how communication between the various managers of these institutions and the bishop failed., and how fundamentally patriarchal and paternalistic the diocesan management ethos towards the school remains.

In August 1994, relations in the Boraja community of the Lay Assistants had broken down so much that the bishop, just returned from a fund-raising trip to Italy, 'solved' the situation by sending one of the members, Etoru Veronica, to Italy on an advanced tailoring course with only two days' notice. That she was the only sewing teacher at BDSI mattered less to him than the headache the Lay Assistants were causing him. The Headmistress heard that she was losing one of her few permanent members of staff, and one utterly essential to the core curriculum, from another Lay Assistant in the parish. With UNEB practical examinations due to take place within weeks, the loss of the sewing teacher could not have been more inappropriately timed. The following fieldnotes extract from August 1994 illustrates what happened :

"Rosa Amaniyo is incensed at the bishop's disregard of the school's needs, and at the start of the week she travelled to Arua to speak to the bishop, and after three days, eventually saw him. He promised to send another Lay Assistant, Amia Florence, with some tailoring experience to the school, while Rosa's protests about the students' panic, and the need to have a trained teacher well versed in the examination's syllabus went unheeded. She visited me on her return from Arua, still annoyed about the affair. I asked whether she had gained anything from her frustrating visit, and she replied "Transportation", with a shrug. I hadn't a clue what she meant. She then explained that the bishop had given her US \$100 to cover her "transportation costs" to town and back. This seemed odd since this represented more than twice her monthly salary, and was several hundred times the cost of the bus to Arua. She explained, resignedly, that this was his way of apologising to her personally for the trouble that his decision had caused, and that when he offered the money (in US currency)

she knew that his decision about Etoru Veronica was final. She accepted the money, as 'transportation' since it would have been madness to refuse it. The bishop knew that she had many nieces and nephews' school fees to pay at that time."

"Amia Florence, the Lay Assistant who has some tailoring experience and who was instructing a few women at Lodonga in sewing, came to replace Etoru Veronica. She is unhappy to have been sent to Boraja, and feels very nervous at the prospect of teaching students for an examination which is at a higher level than she had ever taken herself. Meanwhile Rosa heard that the only reason that Fr Pedro 'let Amia go' from Lodonga was that he intended to replace her with Bako Betty, one of the youngest Lay Assistants, who was still training in Kampala.

The bishop is sponsoring Bako Betty in an advanced Domestic Sciences course, with the intention that she should eventually take on administrative and teaching duties at BDSI. Fr Pedro is also setting up a Tailoring course at his new VTC in Lodonga, and intends placing Bako Betty there. Both have claims on the loyalty of this young woman, who they see as the answer to their staffing requirements. However, as Amaniyo Rosa dryly observed, "Bako Betty ? That one is too clever and pretty to remain a Lay Assistant long. She will marry instead, and they will all be annoyed."

The sequence of events chronicled above illustrates several aspects of 'ownership' operating within the diocese and affecting the institutions of BDSI and the Lay Assistants. Ownership of property and land remains a confused issue, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that the confusion must be amended to avoid future conflict. More importantly, these events indicate how the labour and loyalty of several trained and talented women is appropriated by men in positions of power in the diocese, namely Fr Pedro and the bishop. I do not claim that these men seek to dominate and discriminate against these women ; it is rather that they assume ownership and responsibility for the employment of these women because of their connection with the established church. These 'mission girls' (whether Amaniyo Rosa, Etoru Veronica , Bako Betty, Ajiko Susan or Amia Florence) are expected to repay the education they received through church institutions and benefactors with their labour and loyalty to diocesan institutions. The administrators of the diocesan funds which enabled these women to be educated are men, who in effect 'own' these 'mission girls'.

This is not to deny that any rebellion takes place among such 'mission girls', and during 1993 and 1994 there was an increasing consensus among parishioners and diocesan employees that the situation with the Lay Assistants could not be sustained. However, up until this time, conditions of 'ownership' operate among the administrators of the diocese and the women that have been 'favoured' with formal education in the past.

The imagined spaces that these women occupy are thus characterised by being 'owned' by the church (and its men) in some respect. While this may be anticipated in the 'development' discourse that informs their space, it does not conflict with the 'lugbara' and 'Catholic' elements. These women are occupying 'mission girl' spaces which are more 'Mary' than 'Eve', and the lugbara cultural discourse from which they also draw is inscribed with patriarchal attitudes of men 'owning' wives and daughters. The 'development' notions of women seeking empowerment and visibility are evident here, but in inverted and contradictory ways. While Ajiko Susan may leave her classroom having taught BDSI students a class in 'Leadership', she may then proceed to ask the parish priest for a lift into Arua, where she will queue for many hours to see the bishop to ask for essential funding for the school, the Lay Assistants or even for overdue salary, which he will only dispense in relation to higher priorities at Ombaci (Boys' school) or Pokea (Junior Seminary).

The imagined spaces of 'mission girls' are thus contradictory and contested, even when women become 'educated' (and visible and empowered). It seems that the patriarchal elements of the 'Catholic' and 'lugbara' cultures which define these spaces and which are understood in terms of 'ownership' and 'loyalty', are still dominant over the 'development' discourse which is so evident in public and in communal discourse.

6.6.2 Accountability

The next section discusses dimensions of accountability as they are expressed materially and conceptually in the imagined spaces of the mission. The Catholic Diocese treads carefully between its loyal and established funding source in Europe, which is happy to fund traditional missionary enterprises or even to trust unquestioningly the integrity of the particular priest to whom money is donated, and the new secular NGO funding sources, which place stricter controls on project spending, but who potentially promise more. So, the bishop and the administrators of the institutions within the diocese which are dependent on external funding have to employ different strategies to attract funding from these various sources.

On one hand, mission appeals are made to the home parishes of missionary priests in terms of 'saving' young Ugandan girls' bodies, minds and souls from the ignorant cultural native traditions, while on the other hand, and to NGOs, the school is presented as a institution independent of the Lay Assistants and dedicated to empowering rural Ugandan women through the acquisition of income-generating skills and services. In these explicit ways, these strategies draw on 'Catholic', 'lugbara' and 'development' discourses in different and deliberate ways. The latter demands standards of accountability from project administrators for which the previously ad-hoc system of donation has not prepared them. Receipts, reports and even photographic evidence are required as 'proof' that monies have been allocated to the stated cause, and there are regular visits from field and project officers to personally check the allocation of.

Connected to the notion of 'ownership', and deriving from the state of confusion regarding the ownership of materials and labour, certain projects run into difficulty in accounting for expenditure. When there was a flurry of rebuilding projects in the parish under the administration of Fr Bepe Fellini, he personally administered several projects concurrently. In time, as one project overspent, and another ran late, there was an injection of private mission funds to 'cover the

cracks', and the manner of accounting for individual projects was his own entirely. When he left the parish to take up the post of diocesan pastoral coordinator in Arua, he remained on the governing boards of several institutions, but relations with the parish soured after his departure and his involvement in parish affairs steadily decreased. Then, although there remained a legacy of 'loose ends' from several projects which he had established, he is not available to 'tidy them up' in the way the parish had become accustomed to. One such case became apparent at BDSI during the handover of administration from November 1993 to February 1994, and the following account is drawn from my diaries and fieldnotes at that time.

6.6.2.a The 40 bags of cement.

BDSI received funding from Cebemo in 1992 for the construction of a classroom block at the north side of the school compound. The local carpentry and building training school 'won' the contract to build the block, which was erected and finished during 1992/1993. At the same time, the training school was completing a building project at the Pastoral Training Centre. When the funding for that project expired before it was completed, Fr Bepe, who was still overseeing the administration of all of these projects, instructed the training school to complete the PTC project with bags of cement intended for the BDSI project, while he recovered the money elsewhere²⁹. After his departure, all three projects were unresolved.

During the handover of the administration at BDSI, the departing Headmistress listed '40 bags of cement', as a debt owed by Fr Bepe (see Figure 6.6). Amaniyo Rosa travelled to Arua to discuss this with Fr Bepe, but found it impossible to meet him. She returned, frustrated, "He is just avoiding me, running away from this debt" she complained.

²⁹ The price of cement was variable and ranged from 9,000ush to 16,000ush during 1993/4. The construction, administration and accounting of projects ideally took place concurrently, but where there was overlap and delay, a project could overspend considerably on the cost of cement alone.

"A few days later, some new Volunteers arrived in Arua, and I travelled to town to meet them, as they visited Fr Bepe. In a quiet moment, I asked him about the bags of cement, and how he thought the school should recover them. He became very irritated and disclaimed all responsibility for the cement, arguing that it was a debt between the PTC, the training workshop and the school; nothing to do with him. I returned to Boraja as frustrated as Rosa. I knew that the cement did not actually exist materially and was a debt on paper only, and as such, the matter might never be resolved. On the same day, the pit latrines serving the students of the school collapsed, and while the school's two precious 'VIP' latrines could be used for a short period, there was an urgent need to construct more reusable latrines³⁰.

Monies for the construction of new latrines had already been obtained from Cebemo some time previously with the intention of constructing them when the new classroom block was complete, but this money was 'tied up' in the Comboni Procure 'somewhere' and clearly would take some time to locate. It was decided to build four on a small site along the northern fence of the compound. With two construction projects underway, the need for the 'missing' 40 bags of cement became urgent. Rosa sent a formal letter to Fr Bepe requesting clarification on the matter; she received a reply denying all responsibility for the cement and requesting that he should be left alone regarding the matter." By the end of 1994, the cement had still not been located, and Rosa had given up ever retrieving it.

The issue of the 'missing' cement is clearly a confusing affair. However, in its very confusion, it encapsulates the problem of how missionary administrators did not exercise the type of financial accountability that is demanded of the local administrators who take control of development projects when missionaries leave.

The cement was the 'loose end' that was never 'tied up' in the implementation of several building projects running concurrently in one place, under the

³⁰ Institutions occupying confined sites in West Nile shared a common problem regarding latrine facilities. Many of the original latrines had filled up, and new ones constructed on fresh land, but over the years, there was less land available to allocate for latrine use. Also, old latrine sites were useless for any other use. Several new designs of 'renewable' latrines were being tried in Boraja, often as part of a 'development project'. Renewable latrines were permanent structures which were filled, left to dry out and cleaned for use again. Locally, the most impressive of these designs was the 'VIP' latrine (Ventilated Improved Pit) which required cement housing, and a proper door with a roof and vent pipe. Although they were intended for use and re-use, the VIP latrines at BDSI were considered 'too good' for the students to use, and so only teachers, visitors and literal VIPs used these latrines.

administration of one person. Fr Bepe's name on the project applications for these building grants helped secure their success. That the funds were channelled through his account in the Comboni procure 'guaranteed' their safe arrival and expenditure in Boraja (according to the funders). In effect, one project ran into another, and in the main part, Fr Bepe was able to 'balance the books' between projects being completed over and under budget, with the cushion of private funding he raised at his home parish in Italy. In this way, he was able to account for the expenditure of project funds from NGOs in a way that created the impression that the projects had run smoothly and been accurately budgeted. He did not have to account for how he spent the money he raised in Italy. When he left Boraja, and when his relationship with people there broke down, the balancing act collapsed. The 'missing' 40 bags of cement are the one small manifestation of this collapse that I witnessed, although I heard of other more substantial problems.

The handover of the administration of these projects to local managers also marks an end to the 'cushioning' of unpredictable project implementation. Local administrators and managers do not have the same resources as the departing missionaries to smooth the accounts of projects they are implementing, while the donor NGOs have little impression of the types of problems that often beset projects. As a result, the management of development projects by local people in the wake of missionary administrators is very often perceived as unsatisfactory, by donors, local people and by missionaries. The habits of financial accountability have not been nurtured in these new managers, and indeed they were never really practised by missionary administrators.

The accountability in question here is not only financial. Fr Bepe did not have to 'give account' of himself in any terms to funders and donors, whereas local administrators do. There is a certain inconsistency in this that is 'postcolonial', rather than explicitly 'patriarchal', although I would contend that the treatment of the female administrators of BDSI had patriarchal elements to it. Fr Bepe

operated within codes of accountability for European missionary priests in Africa, with little 'local' accountability. His successors have to operate within local, foreign and religious terms of accountability in material circumstances that are inherently more difficult than those faced by Fr Bepe.

6.7 Conclusion

Ideas of education for women, and particularly mission education for women have evolved around concepts of domesticity which deliver certain defined imagined space for women. The notion of 'domesticity' is being challenged in BDSI while the students and Lay Assistants individually pursue lives that are neither 'mission' nor 'village' centred, therefore confronting the concepts that the cultures of the school and the village construct. The complexity of the relationship between the Lay Assistants Society, BDSI, the bishop, the school administration, Fr Bepe, Fr Pedro and the government education authorities demonstrates how issues and agendas overlap in times of changing attitudes, transferring power and shifting priorities. Twenty years ago, students emerged from BDSI as Lay Assistants about to take perpetual vows to the Society and ready to look after the Italian priests at Ombaci mission. Their imagined spaces were defined in terms of 'Mary' and 'mother'. Now, the students emerge with some official qualifications, perhaps even enough to study for 'A' levels; they have competed in debating, sports and drama throughout the district, and have the leadership skills to run any youth or women's' groups in West Nile. Their imagined spaces embody 'development' ideals of visibility and empowerment, and local opportunities of full womanhood in the village, in a marriage, in a job. The exceptions to these occupy spaces in which the balance between the contributing cultures is fraught with unease, and who test the boundaries of accountability in disparate ways.

It is clear then, that while women involved in the education taking place at BDSI are engaged in exploring the opportunities within their mission imagined space, that this is conducted within certain patriarchal structures which are still

marked by paternalism and contradiction. The inherent inequality between the men and women involved in the narratives of this chapter is evident in the control they exert over their own future, and the penalty they pay when they breach their imagined space. Also, in terms of 'ownership' and 'accountability', it becomes clear that the women of BDSI continue to explore their imagined spaces within the boundaries set, to a degree, by the men who ultimately run the school. Even the women who administer the school and act as 'role-models' for students occupy imagined spaces which offer contradictory messages. Although these spaces signify opportunity and potential, they are also frustrated by the paternalism and lack of accountability which overshadows the efforts of women to become empowered.

The process taking place, set against a national and regional climate of insecurity, is transgressive and fluid, and women literally move in and out of the mission place as they explore their choices and their spaces. While not always in control of these choices, they come to occupy negotiated imagined spaces that often embody painful decisions and awakenings, especially when set in the context of continuing paternalism. These are not easy spaces to occupy.

BORAJA Domestic Science (Vocational) Institute

This is a Catholic Diocesan Institute, based in St. Joseph's parish, *BORAJA*, in Arua District in north-west Uganda. It was founded in 1969 by a Comboni Missionary Father, as a "Lay-Helpers Training Centre", with the aim of training lay women as social workers and womens' leaders in missions and villages.

The Institute suffered badly in the 1979-1981 war, and was heavily looted, damaged and neglected. In 1986 it was renovated and reconstructed by the diocese, a process which is still continuing. It is now a diocesan Girls' Boarding School, under the direct authority of the Bishop of Arua Diocese.

It is now known as "*BORAJA* Domestic Science Institute", to reflect the school's curriculum specialism. The students, ranging in age from 14 to 24, come from four districts ; ARUA, NEBBI, MOYO and GULU.

Objectives

The Institute was established to cater for those girls who are unable to continue their education at secondary level elsewhere. They may have dropped out of school because of ineligibility, poor academic performance, disability etc. With the aim of re-establishing independent purpose in their lives, the girls are trained in the skills which will empower them to earn a living, raise a family healthily and to become leaders in their home communities.

This skills emphasis, reflected in the core Domestic subjects, is balanced by a basic academic curriculum, which also enables the students to continue their studies after completing their M.D.S.I. course. The school strives to cater for both the less academically gifted students and the more able students, to offer the best opportunities for a secure and fulfilled future for all the girls. There is a good variety of extra-curricular activities and school duties also, which all the students are encouraged to participate in. The school competes at District level in both Sports and Drama.

Course Contents :

Two courses are presently offered :

(a) DOMESTIC

Offered to P.7. Leavers, this is a four year course culminating in U.N.E.B. 'O' Level examinations. Students select from the following subjects :

Home Economics (Home Management, Foods and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles/Sewing), Agriculture, Biology, Typing, Accounts, Commerce, C.R.E., English Language, Mathematics, History and Geography.

Figure 6.1 Detail of introduction to funding proposal submitted by BDSI in 1994

B.D.S.I. BUDGET PROPOSAL 1994 - 1995

Particulars	Income	Inc. subtotals	Expenditure	Exp. subtotals
INCOME :				
Tuition Fees :				
(a) 1994: 57 x 40,000 (Dom) 15 x 38,000 (Bus)	2,280,000 570,000	2,850,000		
(b) 1995: 68 x 40,000x2(D) 15 x 38,000x2(B)	5,440,000 1,140,000	6,580,000		
Development Fund :				
(a) 1994 : 72 x 3,000	210,000			
(b) 1995 : 83 x 5,000 x 2	830,000	1,040,000		
Sales :				
Canteen (i)	-			
Cookery	-			
Home Management	200,000			
Sewing	550,000	750,000		
		11,220,000		
EXPENDITURE :				
Salaries :				
F/T : 35,000+450 x 10 x 12			4,254,000	
P/T : 25,000+450 x 10 x 12			3,054,000	
Wages : 6 x 15,000 x 12			1,080,000	8,388,000
Scholastic Materials :				
Text Books etc			100,000	
Office Equipment			300,000	400,000
Administrative Duties (ii)			525,000	525,000
Sewing Materials			300,000	
Cooking Materials			100,000	
Home Management Materials			100,000	500,000
General Sciences Materials			300,000	300,000
				10,113,000
BOARDING SUPPLIES :				
Food (iii)			3,390,800	
Grinding Charges			250,000	
Firewood			450,000	
Cooking Utensils			150,000	
Transport			300,000	
Miscellaneous			150,000	1,300,000
				4,690,000
Upkeep / Repairs			200,000	
Extra-Curricular Expenses : Sports, Games and Clubs			300,000	500,000
EXTRA-ORDINARY EXPENSES :				
Furniture :				
(a) Desks (10)			200,000	
(b) Shelves (2)			20,000	
(c) Chairs (5)			30,000	
(d) Cupboard (1)			40,000	290,000
				15,593,800
Deficit	4,373,800			
GRAND TOTALS :	15,593,800			15,593,800

Figure 6.2 Detail of BDSI Budget Proposal 1994 - 1995

B.D.S.I. FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1/11/93 - 30/7/94

Particulars	Estimated Income	Actual Income Rec.	Income Not Rec.	Estimated Expenditure	Actual Expenditure
INCOME:					
Balance brought forward	—	99,000	—		
Fees Arrears from 1993	—	173,000	—		
Tuition Fees (Terms 1 & 2, 1994)	16,380,000	3,555,050	12,824,950		
Development Fund (Terms 1 & 2, 1994)	1,260,000	286,450	973,550		
Sales : Canteen	500,000	76,550	423,450		
Cookery	250,000	—	250,000		
Home Management	200,000	66,200	133,800		
Sewing	600,000	206,000	393,400		
Old Sewing Machine	—	170,000	—		
Donations : Bishop	2,000,000	—	2,000,000		
Lay-Helpers	1,000,000	—	1,000,000		
Wellwishers	740,000	212,000	528,000		
Cebemo	—	5,116,000	—		
Caritas Italiana	—	—	4,212,000		
In Bank Account	—	20,000	—		
EXPENDITURE :			Expenditure not met		
Salaries			6,271,350	9,642,600	3,371,250
Wages			724,100	1,080,000	355,900
Scholastic Materials : Text Books etc			- 101,500	200,000	301,500
Office			115,860	250,000	134,140
Equipment					
Sewing Materials			-1,069,000	250,000	1,319,000
Cookery Materials			-11,700	100,000	111,700
Home Management Materials			-18,900	100,000	118,900
General Sciences Materials			343,500	350,000	6,500
BOARDING SUPPLIES :					
(1) Food			5,978,350	7,755,000	1,776,650
(2) Grinding Charges			197,770	305,000	107,230
(3) Firewood / Fuel			395,900	540,000	180,100
(4) Cooking Utensils			150,000	150,000	—
(5) Transport			495,000	600,000	105,000
General Upkeep / Repairs			57,150	250,000	192,850
Sports and Games / School Clubs			205,000	500,000	295,000
Canteen			41,400	183,000	141,560
Miscellaneous			179,200	300,000	120,800
EXTRA-ORDINARY EXPENSES :					
PROJECT - Sanitary Pit Latrines			-896,200	—	896,200
- Home Economics Marketing			-50,000	—	50,000
FURNITURE - (1) 30 desks (10)			100,000	* 300,000	200,000
(2) 3 shelves (0)			15,000	15,000	—
(3) 5 chairs (0)			30,000	30,000	—
(4) 2 cupboards (1)			-14,400	30,000	44,400
Cash in Hand					96,000
Debts owed to school					55,000
Unaccounted for					2,330
GRAND TOTALS	22,930,000	9,980,850			9,980,850

Figure 6.3 Detail of BDSI Financial Statement 1/11/93 - 30/7/94

BORAJA DOMESTIC SCIENCE INSTITUTE:

REPORT ON SCHOOL PROGRESS AND FUTURE PLANS:

I. ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS 1994:

The number of applications for the Domestic course ^{is down} as done on previous years (28) despite extensive advertising. 26 were interviewed by a panel of eight, and 20 were accepted. We have 14 applications for the Business section. Consultation with the teachers concerned for this section has meant that the applicants have been invited to join the school in August, without prior interview. Past experience has shown us that this section experiences delays at enrolment, and when awaiting exams results- and we wish to re-establish the section and have it fully functioning(for IB) this coming term.

Class IB - 17 students (1 left in term 2, discovered pregnant)

Class 2D - 13 students (4 did not return from term 1)

Class 3D - 13 students (1 did not return from term 1)

Class 4D - 14 students

Class IB - 14 Arriving in term 3.

Due to the absence of the Business Section students, accomodation has not been a problem this year - all the dormitories and Cubicles are fully utilised. Many students are facing severe financial difficulties in the meeting the payment of school fees, and this is the main reason for student drop-out.

2. DISCIPLINE:

There have been no serious cases of discipline among students, and the staff. So far in 1994 , the discipline committee has not had a reason to meet. The school Council, the Prefectorial body and ad'hoc school conferences combine with daily assembly to deal with day problems. A counselling programme has not been established yet, and since the chaplin is no longer on the school teaching staff, he is generally less available to the school. Mass is organised twice a week for students, and occassinnally a special mass is organised in the school compound.

3. CURRICULUM EVALUATION:

(a) The Business Section will resume with class IB in August, offering the following subjects, for which we already have teachers on staff: Business English and Calculat... Principles of Accounts, Commerce and Typewriting.

Figure 6.4 Detail of introduction to BDSI annual report to Board of Governors 31/7/94

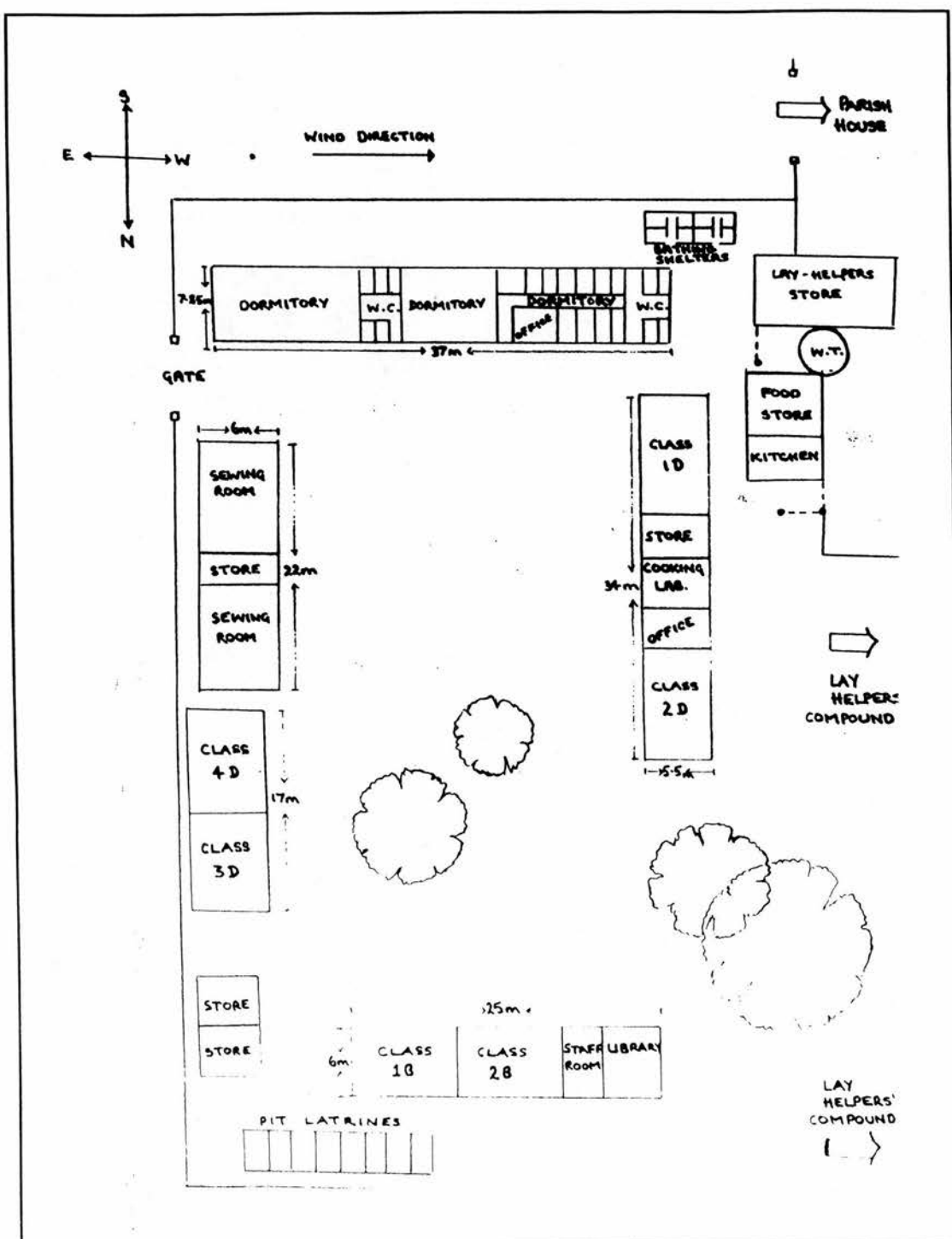


Figure 6.5 Detail of map of BDSI submitted with funding proposal :
Grotto replaced by tree

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1. All the Projects assigned be implemented i.e.
sanitary system and reports be made to CEBEMO.
Buying of the IO Sewing Machines and reports be made with
Photographs.
Renovations - painting of roofs, repair of doors and ceiling
etc.
Desks for the Business section to be made.
Plan on the Dormitory extension. P.T.O.

P.T.O.

Chapter Seven : Mission Health and Women

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the connections between Christianity and wellbeing are explored in the context of the relationship between a mission hospital and a congregation of African sisters employed there¹. I describe how mission places which are purveyors of western medicine are sites of opportunity, adjustment, contest and unease. They offer spaces for women in particular ways, connected to western and missionary constructions of women, but realised within the imaged spaces that mission women occupy. The particular imagined space of indigenous religious sisters is explored, indicating how their association with the missionary medical endeavour has moulded their spaces in terms which contrast with the 'traditional' imagined space they have rejected. The 'everyday' is examined in terms of one issue - the fundamental and ongoing contest between local and imported understandings of illness, healing and wellbeing, and this helps set this context of unease. Again, in interpreting the imagined spaces occupied by figures in the mission hospital place, I examine and interpret narratives based on particular lives in Boraja hospital, to illustrate how the boundaries of the Sisters' imagined space are tested and breached by their negotiation of appropriate and accountable roles. The implications of these negotiations within such imagined spaces to the issues of ownership and accountability are examined, illustrating how one particular sister's exploration of her imagined space directly affected the medical function of the mission hospital.

7.2 Mission Health

Consider the following extract from a Letter from Mons. Geyer Fondatore to the Father General of the Verona Fathers in 1910, as these missionaries evangelised Tombey in northern Uganda:

¹ These reflections are offered from a methodological position which is less intimately involved than in Chapter 6; I did not work at the hospital. However, Michael my husband did, and he carried the issues and stories of the place home with him, where he shared them with me. I engaged at a daily level with certain people connected with the hospital, whose opinions and information added to the general communal discourse of the mission place of which the hospital was undoubtedly 'the main player'. In the second half of my fieldwork, I attended the hospital for antenatal care, and shared in the experiences and stories of many women who attended the hospitals maternity clinics. This then is the position from which I write.

"All the Bahri fled, one woman alone stayed still. Asking her to cover herself up to be photographed and looking at her, I saw that she carried a bundle tied to her back, it was a small child. What a horror, all covered with wounds and with her eyes closed by ulcers. Her face and the extremities of her limbs covered with rot. It was said to me that the father was affected by a similar illness, and that the child would soon die and be thrown in the river. Meanwhile I took a rag with water, and whilst the Brother offered sugar to the mother, I baptised the child, the godchild, giving her the name of my mother, Mary." (G.Fondatore, January 26th 1910)

Here we see vividly demonstrated the missionary account of a first encounter between this Ugandan woman and the Italian missionary. The woman's desperation, her social exclusion from her own group, the terrible disease afflicting the family and the reaction of the missionaries are all encapsulated in the plain language of this account. That the priest attended to the soul of the stricken child while the brother gave the woman food illustrates their apportioned tasks and priorities, and delivers an immediate image of the duality that has attended the notion of wellbeing in Christianity and mission.

7.2.1 Body and Soul

Since Descartes theorized in 1619 that the 'body' and 'soul' were separate entities, thus effectively ending the conceptualisation of the physical and spiritual as one, rending theology from science, and creating medicine as an unattached discipline of the cartesian scientific endeavour, the notions of 'health', 'wellbeing' and 'healing' have been individually dichotomous and dualistic. McGilvray (1970), Wilkinson (1970) and Vere and Wilkinson (1997) discuss the importance of this disassociation for contemporary mission medicine, tracing the meaning of health and wellbeing through biblical texts and interpretations. Of particular note is that there is no biblical

Hebrew word for body (unless it is dead), since the 'person' is considered to be both body and soul together², and that the biblical word 'sozo' refers equally to the salvation of the body as of the soul. McGilvray discusses the role of the individual in salvation, arguing that while personal salvation may be the primary task of the church, it is entirely in the context of the corporeal that salvation is won (1970)³. These ideas all have relevance to the practice of medicine in the mission church.

Comaroff (1993) examines the connections between the missionary 'healing' work in its colonial context, arguing that "imperial expansion and the rise of biomedical science were in fact cut from the same cultural cloth"(1993:307). In tracing the ways in which western medicine accompanied missionary and colonial movements in nineteenth century Africa, she charts how associations between degradation, disease and contagion were made with 'black bodies', and how the rhetoric of the geographical mission into the 'dark heart' of Africa was matched by the "biological thrust into the dim recesses of the human person"(1993:306), drawing heavily upon the iconography and practice of healing.

7.2.2 Local healing

Although the new testament notion of 'healing' was inspired by the fundamental tenet that 'man does not live by bread alone, but also by the food from the mouth of God' (Matthew 4:4), and was based on the notion of health as wholeness, faced with the physical sufferings of those among whom they preached, the early missionaries turned to the scientific 'cures' of the west, and paid a distinct attention to the health of the body (Comaroff 1993). So, the gospel being preached to the 'African Pagans' went hand-in-hand with the educational and medical work of the missionaries, and it was western medicine which formed the foundation of this medical work:

"The missionary approach to healing was rooted in years of scientific medical

² The Old Testament word 'shalom' means in the first instance, 'totality', 'completeness' and 'wellbeing', and only as an extension of these notions has it acquired its secondary meaning from the idea of harmony in completeness, 'peace'.

³ He draws parallels between individuals coming to worship in a 'sacred place' that is the church, and sick individuals coming to the 'sacred place' of the mission hospital. In each case he urges that the corporate church and wider society be the arena for worship, and that missionary healing should move beyond the hospital compound to identify and address the courses of illness outside this 'sacred place'.

school training. It taught that the pill and the syringe were the weapons with which to fight illness” (Pettifer and Bradbury 1990:107).

This approach represented the importation of the western cartesian separation of body and soul to societies that already regarded the person as a whole entity. Ironically, the missionaries who were on one hand attempting to redress the separation of theology and science which was pervasive in their home places, promoted this very separation in their medical work. Since the evangelising at the time of early missionaries paid little attention to the belief systems they sought to replace, the missionaries did not realise that in dismissing local knowledges which bound a person’s body and soul together, they were also dismissing their opportunity to preach a gospel of ‘whole’ salvation, of body and spirit. The missionary approach was certainly to attend to body and soul, but as separate entities in separate places. The rejection of local knowledge accompanied the nineteenth century racial classifications that invariably placed African man at the bottom of the ladder of Enlightenment, rendering African knowledges worthless, null and void (see Curtin 1964 and Figlio 1976).

The separation of body and soul in the state of a person’s wellbeing is currently being contested by alternative healing techniques, and by ancient therapies from non-western cultures which treat physical ailments with non-pharmaceutical ‘cures’. There has been a gradual awareness that ‘healing’ may be more than a scientific exercise, not the prerogative of the physician alone and that hospitals may not produce conditions of complete healing (Wilkinson 1970). The original United Nations charter drawn up in 1945 did not mention ‘health’ at all, and the Brazilian delegate argued that a fundamental concept of health should be included in such a constitution. This was redressed in 1948, when the World Health Organisation was instituted, and it defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. This was amended in 1984 with the inclusion of “spiritual” wellbeing, indicating the shift in cartesian-based perceptions of health.

Christians have also reconsidered their understanding of and approach to 'health' and 'wellbeing', signifying for some a return to the holistic concept of biblical wellbeing, attending to the spirit and body as one, and a growth in the popularity of 'Spiritual Healers'. For others, in the mission fields and working with cultures which offer alternatives to western medicine, it has meant a radical and 'inculturated' reconsideration of the very basic dualistic separation which was taught by early missionaries, and ingrained in missionary medicine since. Instead of confronting 'local ills' with 'foreign cures', missionaries are beginning to engage with 'local cures' also. The report 'The Healing Church' (1965) was published by the German Medical Mission Institute after a gathering at Tübingen of Protestant theologians considering 'healing'. The report, which recommended a broadening of Christian concepts of health and healing to locate healing with the Christian congregation, with the notion that all healing, whether deemed physical or spiritual was attributable to God, attracted much comment and criticism. However, it has endured as a seminal reflective work (see Lucas 1997) which marks a modern Christian engagement with 'the other' in terms of health and healing⁴.

Just as the issue of health and the practice of medicine are under evaluation within secular and Christian circles, they are zones of contestation, partly because large infrastructures and establishments have grown around the traditional missionary model of separation. This is particularly true in the Christian churches of Africa, where non-Christian methods of healing are common and have long been an area of conflict for missionaries, and where the mission church and the mission hospital have served separate ends in the pursuit of bodily and spiritual wellbeing.

7.2.3 Missionary medicine

Wilkinson describes the appearance of the medical missionary movement in

⁴ An important consideration of 'healing' in the spiritual sense may be drawn from the popularity of Christian spiritual healers, touring Africa and other continents with 'Miracle Crusades' (see Pettifer and Bradbury 1990 and Gifford 1997). In their healing crusades, Healers associate illness with sin, and promise wellbeing through salvation. A declaration by Pastor Reinhard Bonnke in Nairobi in June 1988, "Sickness is the work of the devil. in the name of Jesus I come against every power of disease" is typical of the declarations made (Pettifer and Bradbury 1990 :100/1).

nineteenth century Europe as an “attempt to bridge the gap between the doctors and church” (1970:76), and ‘The Good Physican’ (O’Brien, 1962) is a fine example of a text in praise of the medical mission of the first CMS doctor to arrive in Uganda (1896), Sir Albert Cook⁵. The founder of Mengo Hospital and of the first nursing training in Uganda, whose research and care were fundamental to the diagnosis and treatment of the deadly ‘sleeping sickness’, he became embroiled in the delicate politics of Buganda by sheltering the young Daudi Chwa from infancy until he was ready to assume the throne of the Kakaba. Cook falls into the categorization of ‘heroic’ missionaries who litter the Victorian popular publications of the turn of the century (Pettifer and Bradbury 1990). It is interesting to note the role taken by his wife, who accompanied him as a CMS missionary to the country in 1896, working as a nurse throughout her life there⁶. While there, she was nurse, mother, missionary and wife.

Kirkwood describes how for Protestants, “missionary medical work began with the informal first aid and home nursing help and advice offered by wives”(1993:35), which gradually progressed to the establishment of dispensaries, clinics and hospitals eventually employing and training both missionary and local medical staff. For Catholics, congregations of priests and brothers were soon followed to the mission field by a congregation of Missionary Sisters. In Uganda the first congregation of Sisters to join the Catholic mission in 1899 were the ‘Sisters of Our Lady of Africa’, commonly known as the ‘White Sisters’⁷. Tourigny’s description (1979) of their impact serves well to illustrate the expectations and obligations they exercised at this time.

“With the arrival of the White Sisters, more attention could be given to women and girls. Hardly a week after their arrival, they recruited the first women catechists, some of whom were to later form the nucleus of the first

⁵ The first European doctor to visit Uganda was Emin Pasha (Edward Schnitzer) in 1876, who later became Governor of Equatoria and was a pivotal figure in the colonial history of East Africa (Foster (1970)).

⁶ As I discussed in chapter 3, women missionaries were considered pivotal to the ‘Christianisation’ of the African homeplace, and medical women missionaries (usually nurses) worked to care for the missionary community and the people among whom they worked.

⁷ Founded by Archbishop Lavigerie in 1869 in France, to accompany the ‘White Fathers’.

'bannabikara'⁸. The sisters then took over the classes preparing for the baptism and first communion of children and organised a little school for girls. Special classes were offered to the women of the area to give them some elements of domestic training. The sisters also spent much time visiting the villages and giving all the assistance they could to the local women and girls. Since Mapera's time⁹, a small dispensary had been a regular feature in all the missions but the sisters, who were better trained in this work, could now develop the dispensary at Rubaga in such a way that within a few years they had there a modest hospital to receive the first victims of sleeping sickness" (1979:67).

Both the O'Brien text and the Tourigny extract reveal the type of language used to describe the work of women in the nineteenth century missions. Diminutive words like 'little' and 'small' attend the descriptions of work these women did, which is cited in secondary terms to the male missionaries' work. The women are portrayed as occupying themselves with supplementary tasks of tending to women and children, establishing 'special' 'modest' and 'small' schools, merely 'visiting' people and places. This portrayal of women missionaries has been redressed to a degree by the volume "Women and Missions : Past and Present" (Bowie, Kirkwood and Ardener 1993) which focuses specifically on the work of women missionaries and the other women present in Christian missions, Sisters, students and parishioners. In general, both Protestant and Catholic male missionaries had women looking after them, and specialising in the 'caring' side of the ministry, particularly with women and children (Bowie *et al* 1993), which set a model for the converted to observe and follow.

7.2.4 Women's spaces in mission hospitals

The vast majority of medical establishments in sub-Saharan Africa were established by Christian missionaries, and while many have been 'handed over' or 'taken over' by the national government, a very significant proportion of these health units,

⁸ The buganda name for religious sisters meaning 'Virgin Mary', see Table 7.4 for the growth of indigenous orders of religious women in Uganda.

⁹ 'Mapera' was the local nickname given to Fr.Lourdel, the first of the White fathers to evangelize in Uganda.

dispensaries and hospitals are still administered by missionaries or indigenous diocese (for West Nile see Chapter 4, where maps 3 and 6 illustrate how there are communities of religious women living in every diocesan health unit/hospital location). These continue to be sites of contest, and within these women now occupy several imagined spaces that do not exist anywhere else locally. Furthermore, the spaces that women occupy in hospitals are in themselves sites of contest and negotiation, in several different respects. The two main spaces that I will discuss at this stage involve women in different ways, one is a space of crisis and conflict, the other a space of opportunity, and both are presented in the context of the mission hospital at Boraja.

7.2.4.a Having Babies

In lugbara tradition, a woman delivers her baby in a house within her husband's family compound, and is attended principally by her mother-in-law (although other women of her husband's family may assist). She should deliver without making much fuss, and should demonstrate her good character by not crying or screaming during the delivery (similar expectations are reported of the Gisu (La Fontaine 1972) and the Bemba (Richards 1950:35)). Once the child is born, the traditional birthing rites are carried out and the baby is named (see chapter 5).

In the past, there was a high mortality rate among mothers and babies due to complications arising during labour. When the first missionaries arrived, they witnessed what they regarded as senseless suffering and death as mothers delivered babies in their homes, and they began to offer biomedical interventions in hospitals to try and avoid such deaths. Women were urged from the pulpit to attend the hospital, to leave the village and to trust their health and their babies to western medicine. As such, this advice was viewed with suspicion and as an insult to the traditional methods that had produced generations of healthy lugbara, with an 'accepted' (but high by western standards) mortality rate. By attending hospital, the rituals surrounding birthing and naming were dislocated, and it was seen by local people opposed to change as an attempt to Christianise the most fundamental of lugbara traditions.

These days, hospitals offer ante-natal care (to anticipate complications such as breech position deliveries), maternity care (providing anaesthetic, caesarean section deliveries, forceps and ventouse deliveries) and postnatal care (treating post-partum bleeding and various infections). For weak or premature babies, hospitals may offer incubator care. All of these measures are regarded as 'interventions' into the local practice of delivering babies at home.

The location and care of delivering mothers has become an area of conflict between those who promote change and those who oppose change to traditional ways of life among the lugbara. By going to hospital to have a baby, a woman leaves the place of her husband, rejecting the help of her in-laws, and enters a 'soft' place where she is helped by medicine and foreigners. Those opposed to change consider it the 'weak' thing to do; it is worse than screaming in childbirth. With their local washes, balms, blades and customs, it is particularly the older women of the villages who are most vociferous in their scorn for 'weak' 'modern' women who deliver in hospital. These 'Aunties'¹⁰ act as custodians of the traditions they themselves have enjoyed and endured, and use ridicule, backed by the weight of the 'calculation' of a bride's 'value' in traditional terms, to associate the hospital with failure for a woman in labour. In most cases, mothers deliver babies safely in this environment, and this affirms the mother's acceptance to her new clan, while the burial of the baby's placenta within the grounds of the family compound symbolises its attachment to the place. In the hospital, the baby's placenta is discarded in a pit with innumerable others¹¹.

Comments from two local women illustrate the general local attitude towards delivering babies in the hospital. It is with pride that Martina claims "I delivered that one, the lastborn, seventh one, on the way to market, picked him up and went on

¹⁰ This term for older family women of some authority is commonly used in northern Uganda, particularly in reference to widows and unmarried women who dispense advice to younger family members who are not their own children.

¹¹ The 'placenta pit' is a feature of rural hospitals in Uganda which do not have incineration facilities. Discarded bodily tissue and amputated limbs join the placentae of babies born in the hospital, thus robbing the latter of the cultural and locational value of bonding the baby with the birthplace.

home", and with some embarrassment that Rebeca 'admits' that her third born was "delivered there at the hospital, I was not very strong and made it there just in time" (Diary notes for March 1993 and May 1993). Both these women have little formal education, and work at the mission in laundering and cleaning. They are not 'top table' people and it is the rituals and routines of the village which frame their own imagined spaces within which they evaluate their own and other women's 'performance' in delivering babies. In their terms of accountability the hospital is a place of 'failure', even if a healthy baby is delivered there.

However, one consequence of this association is that women remain in difficult labour at home far beyond the time when medical intervention could be effective. Dr Laki commented many times "She came too late for me to save" when both mother and baby died in the hospital (fieldnotes, April, June, August 1993, March, May 1994)¹². Women come to the hospital, transported on the backs of bicycles and on foot, in the advanced stages of complicated labours. Often the baby's arm or foot is presenting, and a caesarean section delivery is a desperate attempt to save either life¹³. The doctors and surgeon often struggle to decide to save the mother's life at the cost of the child's. This is a dilemma for people trained to save lives, only too aware how the loss of life could have been averted. They are often left with a sense of failure when lives are lost that they could not save. In their terms, the 'failure' of the conflict between hospital and village births is evidenced statistically in the hospital's annual report, detailing numbers of deliveries, still births and deaths¹⁴.

¹² Dr Laki was the surgeon of the hospital who also served as Medical Superintendent from August 1993.

¹³ A mention in the report's section on the 'Operative Theatre' indicates the type of obstetric complications the medical staff encounter:

"The procedures carried out during labour, and indications for caesarean sections in 1992 remain the same for 1993, e.g. procedures such as episiotomy, vacuum extraction, CS, craniotomy, decapitation and indications such as repeat-CS, Foetal distress, placenta praevia, Transverse lies etc".

¹⁴ In 1993, 205 deliveries were registered in Boraja Hospital, which represented only 3.7% of the target population of 5588 pregnant women in the county, which implied that under 10% of women in the county deliver in some health unit, which is only 1/3 of the national figure (Boraja Hospital annual report 1993: C.1.3.2.). Section C.1.2.4 of the report which deals with 'Mortality' indicates that 10% of admissions due to complications in pregnancy (70 cases) resulted in the death of the mother, a figure very similar to the hospitals' AIDS deaths in 1993. The rate of 1.3% deaths of the admissions to the maternity ward was down from 3.1% in 1991.

Of these births, 16 were stillbirths, and the hospital's annual report states that "The still births are usually mainly caused by a lot of delay at home by the TBAs¹⁵. Long distances to the hospital may also play a part in the delay in some cases." (Boraja Hospital annual report 1993 : C.1.3.2). I recall clearly the medical superintendent's despondency after a distressing case in August 1993 (diary notes, August 16th 1993) :

"Michael was called out to the hospital last night to put the generator on quite late. They needed light and power and the sterilizer for an emergency operation on a young woman delivering her first baby. She had been in labour 4 days before the 'aunties' allowed her husband to bring her in. I saw Dr Laki this morning, exhausted and so sad. The baby had been breech, and had been tugged by the feet so much that it jammed in the birth canal. It had died by the time she arrived at the hospital, but the poor wee girl (she was barely 16) was wasted herself, utterly exhausted. He delivered the baby, and saw masses of infection already. He's done what he can but he does not expect her to survive. Margaret (Dr Laki's wife) warned me that he was annoyed, and right enough, when he was telling me the story, his eyes welled up and he began to quiver with, I don't know, anger, I suppose. He banged the table and said "these people are so stupid, so stupid! I could not save her, it was too late". He just sat there, defeated. Margaret said that even if the young girl does survive, she will never have other children, and then the family will reject her anyway".

The reaction to such deaths does not serve to bolster the hospital's reputation locally; it is deemed a 'place of death', since (now unavoidable) deaths occur there. As Dr Laki lamented "It seems we cannot win this one" (Diary notes, August 16th 1993).

Arua Diocese (and most medical administrations in Uganda) has initiated programmes to prevent this type of occurrence. The aim is not to prevent deliveries taking place in the villages, but rather to ensure the safety of these, and to safeguard pregnancies which are not straightforward. To this end, extensive ante-natal facilities are made available free of charge at the Diocesan medical centres, check-ups are carried out by trained midwives, and multiple pregnancies, breech position and irregular pregnancies are identified and monitored. These mothers are encouraged to consider a hospital delivery. To support these initiatives, training courses for 'Traditional Birth Attendants' have been held throughout the diocese, instructing the 'aunties' in the importance of sterilisation, sharp implements and hygiene while training them in the diagnosis of complications in early labour. These courses are

¹⁵ TBA is the abbreviated name for Traditional Birth Attendants, who are often the aforementioned

carried out by medically trained local hospital employees, who engage with the 'aunties' in terms of respect for their traditional methods, emphasising that the hospital is for unusual and emergency deliveries. Also, young people attending local schools are instructed in the basics of safe childbirth¹⁶.

In this way, the hospital is a place of conflict, 'failure' and crisis, where babies are born and where mothers and babies still die 'unnecessarily'. The imagined spaces that women occupy are of lugbara 'tradition' and contested pride, where, if they choose to attend the hospital to deliver their babies, they are perceived to have 'failed' within lugbara communal discourse. The boundaries of accountability that operate are literally at the hospital gate - represented in the decision to go to hospital or not. In 'development' terms, women's imagined spaces are characterised by the 'modern' choice to deliver their children in the sanitised surroundings of the hospital. This is closely aligned to the 'Catholic' position on the decision, which is rooted in the notion that any village medical care is 'pagan'. These elements clash directly with the lugbara terms of accountability and represent a contradiction inherent in birthing decisions for lugbara women.

However, by working with the 'other' (the Auntie) instead of relentlessly against it, the medical administrators aim to target hospital resources where they are most effective, and to allow what has 'worked' for generations to continue to do so, partly in recognition that both mother and baby thrive in surroundings which are familiar and supportive to them. In this way, the medical 'development' parameters of safe maternity care extend into the villages, and on the occasions when all is not well with a pregnancy or delivery, the admission of a woman into hospital will hopefully be viewed as an acceptable and necessary extension of her 'lugbara' village pregnancy into the hospital place. This process of reconstructing the imagined space of women in hospital delivering babies is, I believe, underway, but it is a slow process.

'aunties'.

¹⁶ An example of this was a 'First Aid' course run for the students of BDSI in March 1994, of which a full day was devoted to training in the safe delivery of babies, and the importance of diagnosing difficulties and of hospital care in these circumstances.

7.2.4.b Nursing

The second space I describe is one of opportunity for lugbara women in the hospitals and clinics of the region and diocese. Nursing has provided local women with a 'modern' dimension to their imagined space within which they enjoy status and income which does not usually conflict with their 'traditional' female role as wife and mother.

Nursing has emerged in the past thirty years as a career available to local women with some formal education, and the standard of educational background is reflected in the nursing qualifications attained. The significance of the blossoming of this career for women in the developing world is discussed by Holden and Littlewood (1991), who examine the anthropological contribution of women of other cultures engaged in dispensing western medicine. In Boraja hospital, the nursing staff are strictly graded according to qualifications, and throughout the region there is a shortage of nurses with formal nursing qualifications. As a consequence of this, there is a value and status attached to nursing and nurses in local *and* mission terms. Along with teaching, nursing is considered a 'respectable' and 'appropriate' job for women, even by village elders opposed to change. Avenues into nursing are more flexible than teaching and it is a more 'useful' skill to have at home, as well as being a cash-earning job. Women with academic potential were rarely directed towards the higher ranks of the medical profession, as noted by Kirkwood (1993) :

“However, even the medical profession was affected by the traditional ‘myopia’ regarding the academic potential of girls. For that reason, the latter were largely channelled into the lower levels of the medical profession” (1993:184).¹⁷

Lubanga (1991) has discussed the role of the African nurse, pointing out that their role in the “economic well-being of the African community should not be underestimated”, since they have provided precious and reliable income to many families struggling to survive, while administering the backbone of western medical care in many parts of the continent, especially those that are rural in character and

¹⁷ The case study detailed below (section 7.5.3) is very much the exception to this rule.

which have a shortage of doctors (see Chapter 4). In this way, the community benefits from both the training and the earnings of the nurses. Nursing is therefore a desirable occupation for women, and many students at BDSI expressed the ambition to eventually become a nurse. 'Mission Girls' have a tradition of providing mission hospitals and schools with their labour, and were favoured for placement in mission institutions because of their 'Christian' background, as Kirkwood again noted, "An appreciable number of mission girls were trained as hospital orderlies, nursing auxiliary and midwives in mission hospitals and some qualified as nurses" (1993:184).

Once 'qualified', the status within the profession of nursing is very rigidly ranked between nursing aides and 'double-qualified' registered nursing officers, and is marked by salary, uniform, accommodation and authority (see Table 7.1). In Boraja hospital, the only double-qualified staff were Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who represented the 'ceiling' of nursing qualifications for women until very recently. It is the 'qualified' grades of nurse who attract unfavourable comments regarding their vanity and lack of commitment, exemplified in 1965 by Leo Kuper in 'An African Bourgeois'¹⁸ :

"They are only concerned with nail polish and status, and they come into contact with a certain amount of misery and want to help it but don't realise the political causes. They just go out with their boyfriends and come back to the same protected life Their ambitions are shaped by the fashion and beauty columns which constitute their main literature. Smartness in appearance is what they desire above all " (1965:232).

The nurses of Boraja attracted similar criticism from local people, with the added charges of laziness and pride. Despite this, nursing has become an attractive 'modern' and 'professional' career for women who may not wish to contest the boundaries of their imagined space, but who are inclined to seek the opportunities available within the space they inhabit.

¹⁸ Kuper's opinions reflect a certain gender politic which may in 1965 have been less objectionable than in current academic discourse.

The occupation of nursing thus offered a 'modern' imagined space for lugbara women which drew favourably, and with little conflict on the contributing cultural elements of the space. It was acceptable for a 'modern' lugbara woman to adopt this occupation which impinged little on her other female duties to family, clan and community and which benefited all of these in some way. In 'development' terms nurses represented 'modern', 'skilled', economically 'empowered' and 'visible' women, dispensing 'modern' medicine to a population in need. In 'Catholic' terms, women working in the hospital, in caring, nurturing terms were fulfilling 'Mary' and 'Martha' biblical roles (as mother of Jesus, and sister of contemplative Mary), while supporting a powerful 'Catholic' presence in the regional healthcare politic. These dimensions together offer more opportunity than conflict for local women who define their imagined space as one of 'nursing', although the space is nonetheless bounded. Certain cultural lugbara codes (relating to local medicines), development codes (relating to proficiency in administering care) and Catholic codes (especially for women religious celibates) continue to operate to define the boundaries of accountability for this 'nursing' imagined space, but in effect they are rarely contested.

7.3 Boraja institutions

In this section I describe the two institutions which frame the analysis of imagined spaces which are central to this chapter. The details of the hospital's history and the representations I make of the lives of the Sisters of an indigenous African congregation contribute more than the facts they contain. The descriptions of these institutions also incorporate events and issues which influence their function today in subtle and nuanced ways, and which also influence the ways in which the women I later focus upon negotiate their imagined spaces.

7.3.1 Boraja Hospital¹⁹

The Comboni Fathers set up the mission at Boraja in 1949 and in 1951 a Comboni Sister arrived to set up a Dispensary, in the site of the present Parish Learning

¹⁹ This account is constructed from many individual and fragmented narratives from local people and missionary personnel. No 'formal' account of the hospital was available to me.

centre. The dispensary was moved to the present hospital site in the 1954, and there, it grew to cater increasing numbers of patients, and to provide more medical services. The existing buildings, along with a new block which was constructed, became the maternity and medical wards of the fledgling hospital. The work of the hospital expanded in the 1960s, as immunisation and feeding programmes were co-ordinated, TB wards were built, and eventually an operating theatre and nursing wards for patients were added. Funds from several missionary organisations were used to build units for a variety of medical needs and by the 1980s, 'Boraja Hospital' offered some of the best medical care (in Western terms) to be had in West Nile. While Ugandan nursing staff were being trained, the senior medical positions remained in overseas hands. Until the late 1970s all of the doctors who came to work in Boraja were Italian expatriates, and it was only during Amin's regime (1969-1979) that significant numbers of northern Ugandans were trained in medicine.

Even when Ugandan staff were available, they were generally reluctant to work in West Nile, and overseas-funded salaries and specially built accommodation were offered to attract them northwards. That such efforts had to be made (with overseas funding) to attract Ugandan medical staff, and that these efforts largely failed, reflects one dimension of how the medicine practised within the hospital remained a 'foreign import'.

During the 'Disturbances' (see chapter 4) the hospital was completely gutted, all equipment and furniture was stolen, while any windows or fixtures were destroyed. Since the local community had fled, and waited some time before returning, the buildings were not maintained and cleaned, and what was left standing by the warring soldiers was soon tumbled by armies of ants. Of all the mission buildings, those of the hospital suffered most destruction in this period. The recent history of the hospital dates from its reopening in 1987, and is finally marked by the presence of Ugandan doctors²⁰. Reconstruction of the hospital began in 1987,

²⁰ Dr Peter Laki, a local doctor, was imprisoned after the fall of Amin and was released from Koboko Prison in 1986, when he came alone to Boraja Hospital and began treating people. After his trauma, his only wish was to remain a surgeon and to remain peacefully in his homeplace.

and teams of volunteer doctors from Europe came and went between 1986 and 1991, assisting local staff. In 1993, the reconstruction of the hospital was completed (see sketch map 8.1).

Today Boraja Hospital offers 192 beds in 5 wards (see Figure 7.1). In 1993 the hospital employed 126 staff, making it one of the largest employers in the district. However, the hospital does not have enough professionally qualified staff, as Table 7.2 vividly demonstrates. In 1993, there were no professionally qualified staff to run the laboratory, pharmacy, X-ray department, dental and physiotherapy facilities, and (rather alarmingly), the anaesthetic equipment of the Operating Theatre. Table 7.3 and Fig. 7.2 illustrate the number of patients treated in outpatients, and the most common reasons that they might be admitted to hospital. Malaria accounts for 38.8% of outpatient illnesses, and 49.95% of ward admissions, while 8.5% of the latter die. The highest mortality rates for admissions are among sufferers of T.B.(27%), meningitis (50%), tetanus (80%) and peritonitis (38.5%). The surgeon carried out 695 operations in 1993, 381 of which were classified as 'major' (Boraja Hospital annual report 1993).

7.3.1.a The hospital's role

In its rebuilt state, Boraja hospital shares features and problems with many mission hospitals throughout Africa. It now belongs to the Catholic Diocese of Arua. McGilivray (1970) describes how "The churches ... have inherited a series of very expensive, complicated, hard-to-understand facilities which they are not sure what to do with, but for a number of reasons, are most anxious to preserve"(1970:58).

As one of the "old trio of mission work" (Hastings 1967:156)²¹, mission hospitals in Africa today are caught in a dilemma of funding and function. Due to a history of generous funding from overseas which has equipped such institutions to a high standard (albeit usually unsustainable), the question arises whether to 'hand over' to national control, or to remain as an overseas-dependent 'centre of excellence'. As a German volunteer employed at the diocesan Social development Department

²¹ The other two being the chapel and the school.

commented “When this happens, the standard drops. Of course it must. It must find its own level which is sustainable according to the resources that are available here” (Deuber , Tape 20, January 1994). Hastings (1967) and Mullin (1965) discuss the role of the missionary institution, agreeing that when it is appropriate, missionary control should be withdrawn. Hastings sees the hospital as a possible site of evangelisation, since “Suffering is not a mere physical process, so the church’s medical mission is not a concern with the physical alone. It reaches to the whole man, to enfleshed spirit” (1967 :154), but warns that “what we are always in danger of doing is to allow services and witness to degenerate into mere management” (1967:155). Mullin worries that in creating and maintaining centres of excellence as a result of competition, the church is creating “the exact opposite of the state of mission and co-operation with every class of society ... which is the aim of the apostolate of the new era” (1965 :22). Such concerns were not to the forefront as Boraja Hospital was recreated over 20 years later, but are coming into question now and its sustainability is in question.

7.3.2 Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (established in 1942) was the first religious congregation for women established in the north of Uganda, and only the third in the country (see Table 7.4)²². In the 1940s, the Bishop of lower Equatoria²³ was a Comboni called Angelo Negre. He was concerned about the education of young Ugandan women, whom he viewed as essential to the true evangelisation of the area, a common missionary belief. Many local girls expressed interest in joining the religious life of the Comboni sisters, but the Combonis felt that it was impractical for them to join the order, which still trained its postulants in Italy, in an Italian milieu. Negre felt that if Ugandan women were involved in the education of Ugandan girls, then the endeavour to Christianise Ugandan homes would be more successful. He met opposition to his plans from both the local community and from the church in Rome, and his funding-raising efforts were at first concentrated among his friends and family in the Italian town of Trento. Later, when the congregation

²² It is still sometimes known by its diminutive title, the 'Little Sisters', although in the post-Vatican II era, this is discouraged.

²³ An immense Diocese covering much of Southern Sudan, northern Uganda and parts of Zaire.

was established, the Holy See and the Comboni Society added their support. At first most of the postulants came from the Alur and Madi regions of West Nile, and later the Lugbara and Acholi started entering the order (see Map 2).

I shall present my perspective on the imagined spaces occupied by members of this congregation in terms of 'potential' and 'commitment', although I appreciate that these are but two dimensions of these spaces which all exhibit contradictions inherent in individual circumstances and lives.

7.3.2.a Alternative imagined spaces

Why would a young Ugandan woman choose to join an indigenous religious community? The following observations are drawn from conversations with many sisters, former sisters and women who considered a life as a sister.

To become a member of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a woman has to convince senior members of the religious community that she is sincere in her vocation, and that the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are within her capability to live throughout her life. She leaves her family, homeplace, the chance of a 'normal' life as wife and mother, and commits herself to a lifetime 'in community' with other Sisters. This decision marks a complete reconfiguration of the imagined space she occupies. In terms of the construction of an alternative imagined space, African congregations of religious sisters completely restructured the traditional imagined spaces that women occupied. Gone was access to Girls' Houses, the market place and funeral dancing, replaced with single-sex schooling and community life with other celibate women. The imagined space of a 'sister' offered education, status, comfort and the fulfillment of a spiritual vocation, but ruled out family life, marriage and motherhood.

None of the Sisters I met came from wealthy families. Their fathers were neither chiefs nor professional men, but catechists and farmers. Nor were they the only child of their parent's union; most were one of several daughters and had many siblings. As such, they did not carry the burden of being the only 'brideprice earner' in the

household. All had received some primary education at mission schools, and been impressed by the Comboni Sisters. In large households, daughters gained low priority in the 'pecking order' for precious school fees, and these girls craved education because it was something desirable that might be denied them. By the guidance and influence of the missionaries they encountered, these women became versant in the language and practices of devout Catholicism, and all of these women claimed a genuine sense of vocation to the religious life, inspired by this spiritual foundation. Even if 'the call' did not inspire women to the Sisterhood²⁴, life as a religious sister offered its own attractions, especially in education, training and security, while the vows ordering life as a Sister generated conflict from time to time.

7.3.2.b Alternative boundaries: religious vows

The vows which a Sister takes at the final stage of her commitment to the religious life render her distinct from women outside the congregation. The vows are poverty, chastity and obedience. The commitment is understood as being as binding and absolute as Christian marriage vows, and these are the terms of accountability which define a Sister's imagined space.

The vow of poverty must be understood in relative terms, and in fact the converse proved true among this congregation. The Sisters enjoyed the support and patronage of their Italian founding congregations, and in material terms, enjoyed a lifestyle with many of the trappings of the European missionaries. Today they generally have large, permanent community houses, eat well, have ready access to medical care, are employed in income-generating posts and have access to transport and technology which was once the privilege of Europeans alone²⁵.

²⁴ It is clearly impossible and inappropriate for me to comment on the source or authenticity of a Sister's vocation, and in this chapter I concentrate upon the material evidence of choices made to join the congregation.

²⁵ In fact the diminutive term 'Little Sisters' is used sarcastically these days, since a good many of the Sisters, having enjoyed sedentary lives with good nutrition, are blatantly called 'fat' by their neighbours, while the Mother General is often referred to as 'the fattest little sister in Uganda'.

The vow of chastity is described by a young sister (Fieldnotes, June 1994) as being 'fairly easy' to live, although those who leave the order on these grounds, would argue with this opinion. When this subject is raised with the Sisters, they point to the difficulties that many of their married relatives endure. The contrast between their own lives, and those of women who live as traditional wives, enduring the taunts of mothers-in-law, bearing children painfully and often, working hard in the fields to feed the family while husbands cultivate tobacco to earn drinking money alone, who struggle to raise and educate children while their husband may bring home a younger wife ... all these trials of lugbara women are cited by Sisters who enjoy material comfort and security in their celibate and childless lives.

However, the defining condition of the vow of chastity is that a sister enjoys no intimate relationships with men. As 'Brides of Christ' Sisters wear rings to signify that they are 'married' to Christ. The implication of this understanding is that to enter a relationship with another (mortal) man would not only be to commit adultery, but to betray Christ himself (see Williams 1975). The discourse surrounding this understanding is a complex weave of asexual fidelity and reconstructed sexual identity, which has only been recently explored by women theologians in the west. In the African context, it is the surrender of the expectation of having children that threatens the construction of the African female identity most fundamentally. As Burke says in her study of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (1993) :

"Without a doubt, the greatest difficulty that the local population had in accepting the catholic sisterhood was in understanding that any women would freely choose to commit herself to live according to a vow of chastity. It seemed hardly possible to fathom the purpose of total continence" (1993:256).

In this study, she describes how the Sisters, through the local use of the word 'Mama' have reconstructed their social and cultural identity within terms of motherhood, rather than in denial of it. By presenting themselves as "Mamas for us all" (1993:257), the Sisters' pastoral, educational and medical work is interpreted as work which nourishes the entire community, and the metaphor of maternity is extended rather than negated. This congregation has been in lower Zaire since 1894,

and has had a century to work at this reconstruction of identity after many years of misunderstanding and difficulty in the past. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, established only in 1942 have not yet reached the stage where local families rejoice in a daughter's vocation, or where people presume that the Sisters *perpetual* vows are just that. One former sister, recalls how their founder encountered scorn on the issue of celibacy, "When he was starting, many people oppose him, saying that African women can't do without men" (Susan Orache, tape 12, June 1994). I found no evidence of the women in this order confronting their (unfulfilled) role of motherhood and reconstituting it in another way, and the female identities they tended to stress were those of being 'brides', 'aunties' and of being 'sisters'.

To lead a chaste and celibate life as a 'Sister' rather than a mother draws on every spiritual resource of a woman, demanding utter commitment. Once past the age when she can bear children, her vocation is generally accepted as secure, and her life as an 'Auntie' begins, when she will shower her nieces and nephews with attention and affection²⁶. Up until this point, it is her spiritual vocation and commitment which carry her through her fertile years, and when the vow of obedience may support this.

The vow of obedience is given most often as the most difficult to live by. Sisters pledge obedience to their Mother General, in the understanding that she will reflect the will of the church. Thus, where they live, how they are employed, and the duration of their contract, are determined by this woman who organises the congregation in relation to the needs of the order, the diocese in which they work, and finally themselves, to facilitate their vocation.

The years between the postulancy and perpetual vows are usually when Sisters undertake their training, and are moved about the country from community to community. Aside from facilitating the acquisition of qualifications, this practice, where Sisters 'go', where they are 'sent' within the vow of obedience, familiarises them with community life in all its forms, and precludes them from making particular attachments in any one location. Once perpetual vows have been taken,

²⁶ Sisters often described themselves as 'Aunties' to local children and to nieces and nephews. The title

and a Sister is fully trained, she is usually sent to one particular community (with nearby institution) where her skills are in demand and where she will remain for some time.

These are the years when a routine is established and when the novelty of training and vocation have worn off, when the number of fertile years can be counted, and when Sisters often reconsider their commitment to the religious life. These are therefore the years when the boundaries framing the imagined space of a Sister are often 'harnessing' rather than 'liberating', and when she may begin to contest them. The terms of accountability, so strongly defined by the communal discourse of the congregational community in 'Catholic' codes, may come into conflict with 'development' codes emerging, or 'lugbara' codes resurfacing. The imagined space of a Sister at this stage of her vocation often becomes less stable than before, as *all* the cultural elements which inform the space become significant. To leave the congregation at this stage is extremely grave in religious terms, since perpetual vows represent an eternal commitment to Christ. If a Sister decides to leave the congregation for whatever reason, this commitment is considered broken and the spiritual 'penalty' is severe. By this stage, it is often her career, her security, her reputation and her spiritual salvation which are deemed in peril if a Sister does quit the congregation, and it is a tremendous emotional struggle to contend with, if faced with this uncertainty.

Many more sisters remain in their congregation, within their imagined space, than leave²⁷, indicating that the weight of their commitment is stronger than any regret they feel about missing out on life as a wife and mother. Within the imagined space of the African sister is a degree of struggle over this aspect of their decision and vocation, but this is alongside the negotiation of opportunities which develop a sister's potential in ways that might have been impossible in her traditional imagined space.

did not carry any connection with the role of a Traditional Birth Attendant.

²⁷ Figures to support this statement were not available to me, and I draw this conclusion from the communal consensus of the lay and religious people who spoke to me on the subject.

It becomes clear then how much a woman stands to compromise, gain or lose in many terms when she commits her life to Christ in a religious congregation. The congregations of Uganda are not oblivious to the weight of the decision that a woman makes to join a congregation, and it is partly to reduce the numbers of departures from religious life that the educational requirements have been raised, and the period of novitiate and postulancy have been increased. From being accepted to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary until taking final vows now takes at least seven years.

Of the Boraja community of 17 Sisters, five are employed at the hospital, and their salaries support the community. These women command considerable authority in the hospital and in the mission community as a whole, and occupy imagined spaces of opportunity and power that may have been denied them outside the congregation. Their spaces are defined by their appearance, their behaviour, their income, their rank and their status as 'Sisters'. They gather together for morning tea separately in the Matron's office every day, a cluster of white and blue spotless holy women. Whether it is brought to them by an auxiliary because of their nursing status or their 'Sister' status is unclear, since it is the combination of these that defines their position in the hospital as privileged and powerful. The imagined spaces of the sisters are strongly identified with the dispensing of western medicine ; even visually, their convent habits and their hospital uniforms are similarly styled, and equally pristine. These sisters occupy imagined spaces of privilege and power that are associated with both the Catholic Church and western medicine, positions which are exclusively female in the mission place.

7.4 A glimpse of the everyday in Boraja hospital

The next sections of my discussion (7.4, 7.5) set the context of how the hospital itself is a contested site of conflict and 'failure', and how the close association of Christianity and western medicine in Boraja establishes conditions for sisters in religious congregations to appropriate opportunity and power while negotiating their imagined spaces as Sisters, and testing the boundaries of these spaces.

According to medical staff at the hospital, the main barrier they face among the local population is the belief that local 'witchdoctors' can cure illnesses that the medical staff believe only their western medicines can effectively treat²⁸. People often attend the witchdoctor before the hospital, for several reasons. In the first instance, if a patient suspects that they have been 'poisoned' by somebody wishing them ill, then only the witchdoctor is able to diagnose and treat this source. Although both the witchdoctor and the hospital demand payment, the former can accept a goat or a chicken, whereas the hospital cannot. Undoubtedly in certain instances a consultation with the witchdoctor results in the recovery of the patient, since business for such doctors thrives in the area. Both men and women practise as witchdoctors, and local men and women consult them to an equal degree, although witchdoctors are not involved in the care of expectant mothers, since this is not considered an illness.

The doctors of the hospitals frequently complain about the fact that patients "waste time and money" going to the witchdoctor, and only resort to the hospital if the witchdoctor fails, by which time, their money is spent and their condition has worsened. Dr Laki described how most of his seriously ill patients came with the scars and signs of the 'traditional washing' which was the most common treatment carried out by witchdoctors. This procedure, which is to free the body of the 'poisons' is carried out in the village, and involves the witchdoctor making many small incisions into the skin of the patient's chest and rubbing in local herbs and oils. When the mixture enters the wounds, dark fluid emerges, often frothy in texture, which is accepted as evidence that the poisons are being removed.

From the western medical point of view, there are several problems with this procedure. Firstly, if a patient is unwell, the procedure may worsen their condition. In many cases infections develop in the sites of the incisions, which are often made with unsterile blades, leading to the need for antibiotics. Most of the herbs used are considered harmless, and may indeed have medicinal qualities, but the oils being used in recent years are the cause of much concern. Vehicle oils (brake fluid, engine oil, even diesel) are in demand by witchdoctors because they produce a more

²⁸ Local people used the term 'witchdoctor' for the men and women who were believed to have

convincing discharge from their incisions, and so an informal market has evolved around providing the 'traditional' doctors with these 'modern' fluids. The following fieldnotes extract from October 1993 illustrates this situation :

"Michael is getting really fed up with Kinyara, the workshop mechanic. Whenever he is needed, he seems to be drunk or absent, and whenever the workshop is supposed to be all locked up, he appears out of the blue. Also, he hasn't much of a clue about the ambulances. However, his sister is Sr. Magdalena at the convent so nobody can shift him. Sarah just tells Michael to keep a close eye on him, but he doesn't want to be so suspicious...."

"..... I think Kinyara has blown it. Michael found him removing the engine oil from the wee pickup this morning, even though it had just been done, but more oil has been used from the store than the vehicles have used, so it's going somewhere... Michael told Dr and Sarah that Kinyara had been playing around with the engine oils and Dr Laki threw a wobbly. He wasn't so much annoyed that Kinyara has been stealing, but more annoyed that he has been taking hospital property to sell to witchdoctors whose treatments make Dr Laki's work so much more difficult. Later, back at the workshop, Simon and Charles had a good laugh about it and Simon said "You know, Mr Michael, we have more medicine in this store here at this workshop than Sr Devota has that way in the dispensary!". Michael put on an extra lock ; Kinyara's due back tomorrow."²⁹

So it is clear how the hospital tool-stores actually 'supplied' the traditional medical practitioners with their 'medicines' through theft, displaying an ironic incongruity in the efforts of the hospital medical staff to put the witchdoctors out of business. Dr Laki, the surgeon believed that a good portion of his heavy surgical load was due to the delay in patients coming to the hospital, already infected and weak from local treatments. He, the other doctors, and the Sisters and nurses who have 'professional' qualifications have no faith in local healing at all, except perhaps for simple treatments like inhaling steam from eucalyptus leaves to treat a cold. They draw a distinct line between these 'herbal' treatments, administered in every home in the village, and consultations with witchdoctors, or any notion of 'poisoning'. Such beliefs conflict with both their religious and their medical backgrounds, and they see

healing powers.

²⁹ Michael's involuntary 'policing' of the mechanical stores arose from the assumption in the hospital that he had no personal interest in the materials himself, and that his 'honesty' could therefore be guaranteed. This assumption was made on the basis of his presence as a (white) expatriate volunteer, in a position of some authority, rather than his gender. It is interesting to note that Michael drew his

no potential dialogue ever occurring with these 'pagan' witchdoctors (Allen 1992 discussed similar distinctions among the Madi).

Less qualified and auxiliary staff are less adamant in their rejection of local healing treatments, and harbour more respect for local notions of 'poisoning'. There are occasions when a patient is brought at an advanced state of illness to the hospital, receives treatment and still dies, and the witchdoctor in the village declares that the auxiliary who helped treat the patient had indeed poisoned them. For this reason, the lower ranks of the medical staff tend not to discredit local practitioners and their treatments as openly as the doctors and Sisters. Such a claim would never be made of a Sister, a Mundu or a Doctor, but one auxiliary was forced to resign her post in the hospital because she encountered such hostility there from other patients, who were convinced that she was a 'poisoner' (Fieldnotes July 1993).

The religious nature of the hospital is reflected in its annual board of Governors' meeting, which opens and closes with prayer, and in the annual report which concludes with the statement "We hopefully look forward to a brighter and more prosperous year in 1994 to the good of the patient and the greater Glory of God" (Boraja Hospital annual report 1993).

The most senior staff at the hospital are among the most publicly devout Catholics in the parish. The doctors, administrator and the Sisters all take prominent seats in the chapel at Sunday mass. Dr Laki is always the first to go forward to make his donation, and to receive communion. The status of the senior medical staff is reinforced and rendered more public by their position among 'the faithful' every Sunday. In this way, being a believer in Christ and in western medicine is evidenced in the holy place, the church. The parallels Mc Gilivray (1970) draws between the sacred place of the hospital to heal the body, and of the church to heal the spirit, are less coherent in Boraja, where the hospital's doctors and sisters deem it a Christian place, and where the chapel's most prominent worshipers deem the church a medical place.

advice and authority from the Ugandan accountant at the hospital, a woman.

Being a mission hospital entrenches Boraja hospital in this position of polar opposition to local healing treatments, since it is fighting the war with disease and infirmity on religious *and* medical grounds. I found absolutely no evidence of any attitude of openness to 'the other' among the medical staff, who are embittered that their medical vocations are hampered by the persistently popular witchdoctors. It would be inaccurate to locate this zone of contest at the fence which surrounds the hospital site, since elements of traditional medicine are ironically located within the hospital (in the tool store), while the hospital's inoculation and primary health care programmes reach out into the villages 'deepest in the bush'. However, there is less progress towards redefining the local concepts of healing to remove their associations with paganism and sin, than there is towards recognising the value of TBAs in maternal care (as discussed in 7.2.4.a). The contest in this case is primarily between the chief practitioners of each healing method, the doctors and the witchdoctors, who each represent to the other a future they fear and despise.

7.5 Imagined spaces in the hospital

In this section, I examine three central figures in the hospital and discuss what they represent in terms of the negotiated spaces evolving in places where contrasting life patterns conflict. As in chapter 6, I take one inanimate object to demonstrate how it symbolises the function of the hospital as grandiose and sometimes ineffective, before examining the imagined spaces occupied by two women in the hospital who have explored (and breached) the boundaries of their spaces in different ways. Their narratives take place against the background of healing conflict that the hospital encompasses, and which they are involved in.

7.5.1 Gates

At the entrance to Boraja hospital, there is a tall set of iron gates, mounted on two walls which curve like arms towards the main road. I believe these gates are symbolic of the boundaries being traversed by the people connected to the business of healing in the area.

The gates are painted blue and the walls are constructed of stone blocks cemented together, with the name of the hospital large alongside a permanent notice which details the visiting times in Kiswahili, English and Lugbara. There is also an instruction to leave all weapons and munitions outside the hospital compound. The gates of other hospitals in the region are plain and unimpressive in comparison.

The gates represent the use of local labour and materials, with the expensive additional cost of cement which was taken as part of the overall construction budget. The gates were the idiosyncratic, lasting monument to a foreign volunteer, who constructed the gates in much grander form than had been originally envisioned or budgeted for. The gates are inappropriate for their use, but achieve a symbolic grandeur and significance which local people appreciate. Local people *like* their gates, it makes their place seem important and such an extravagant construction indicates that somebody (albeit a visiting foreigner) believes that the gates, the hospital and the community will be permanent.

The gates themselves have become a focal point for Boraja, it is a place where people gather, where arguments and romances take place, where 'big people' arrive to visit the hospital in vehicles. They are shaded by several large trees, and are manned by several 'askari', who open and close the gates for vehicles. People cluster around the gates, some selling food and snacks for the attendants who were staying at the hospital, and the roots of the largest tree served as a bench for those waiting for the bus to Koboko (which operated in the latter months of 1994).

Many incidents which take in the hospital feature the gates:

"Some Sudanese drove a jeep into the hospital last night and shouted their threats to the askaris, warning that if the hospital didn't stop treating the 'enemy' (the SPLA), it would be bombed next week" (Diary notes, August 15th 1993), "John was caught stealing the bath from the maternity ward there at the gates" (Diary notes, October 1993), "Michael chased the vehicle up to the gates, looking for Sr Matron, to find Dr James teaching himself to drive, having sent the driver home" (Diary notes May 1994), and "Florence walked from her house to the hospital, since the baby was really on its way, but the askaris at the gates were drunk and asleep and she couldn't wake them to get in. Rose had to throw stones at them to wake them up, and Florence delivered within minutes of reaching the ward" (Diary notes, December 1993).

Through the gates pass the people seeking medical treatment, and through the gates pass the stolen goods from the hospital's drugs and mechanical stores. The gates therefore do not act as a barrier, but as 'flagposts' of where discourse on traditional healing is no longer acceptable. Visually, their impact is more effective than their physical presence is. They accommodate whatever monitoring of unacceptable healing the hospital can manage, but as the diary extracts above indicate, they are there to be breached by 'insiders' intent on abusing the facilities within, while the guardians of the gates are not alert enough to admit a local woman wishing to deliver her child there, let alone halt any intruders.

As such, these gates are symbolic of several facets of 'medical' life in Boraja. They were constructed at an inappropriate scale by an overseas volunteer, and are grander than the institution they mark. They function for security only sporadically, and indeed sometimes serve to exclude legitimate patients more effectively than dangerous intruders. In this, the way that the gates fail to function mimics the way in which the hospital fails in its mission to administer western (Christian) medicine to all ills in the area.

7.5.2 The 'disgraced'

This second case study is of a woman working in Boraja Hospital, who chose the imagined space of life as a Sister and then breached the boundaries that space allowed. The imagined space she now inhabits is neither 'traditional' nor 'religious', but is negotiated in terms of compromise of both. Her 'fall from grace' has been cushioned by the intervention of its architect, and by the skills she acquired as a Sister.

Sarah Orache is a woman of 52 who is a senior member of the hospitals' administrative team. Significantly, she is not a local woman, but Acholi, and she has a tendency to emphasise how much taller, more attractive, more intelligent and hardworking her own ethnic group is, compared to the lugbara among whom she now lives and works. She was raised the daughter of a catechist, a 'mission girl' whose siblings are now professional people in her home town, Gulu. She entered the convent of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1966, when she had completed P7, taking her perpetual vows

at the age of 19 in 1971, after five years of postulancy and novitiate. Then she returned to secondary school, where she completed her secondary education as a Sister. She attended training courses in administration and accounting in Kampala and Mwanza, and worked at a Girls' school in Gulu before being transferred to Boraja hospital in 1985. Here, she worked alongside the Comboni Fathers as they co-ordinated the rebuilding of the mission. Working closely with Fr. Bepe Fellini the parish priest, they became romantically involved, a situation which eventually came to the attention of the Mother General in Gulu, who sent for Sarah in 1988, while Fr Bepe went on leave to Italy. After much soul-searching and heartache, Sarah decided to leave the congregation, even though she knew it would "break my parents' hearts". When I asked whether she chose to leave or was told to leave, she affirms that "I was sent away, they told me" (Tape 12, June 1994).

However, when Bepe returned to his parish in Boraja, he felt guilty about Sarah's predicament, and secured the position of accountant in the hospital for her. Installed in a traditional house in the volunteers' compound, she helped look after his visitors. In 1991, she moved into a small permanent house at the back gate to the hospital, where nieces and nephews stayed with her, as she paid for their education at local secondary schools. She remained close friends with Margaret Laki, the wife of Dr Laki, and occupied an unusual social position in the mission (fieldnotes March 1993-July 1994).

Although she is officially 'disgraced' in 'Catholic' terms of accountability, her professional 'development' status remains intact, and she remains on good terms with Fr. Bepe, the bishop, and most of the Sisters in the congregation. She remains among the 'top table people', a friend of the foreign volunteers, and participates in liturgy preparation in the parish. She wears smart clothes, local and foreign, keeps a very tidy and hospitable house, while dispensing advice and observations freely. Her ambition is to return to her beloved Gulu when peace is restored there, and to support her parents. She refers to herself as 'Auntie', and signs personal letters to younger people in this way, assuming a title which women in both lugbara and religious domains use. Her current imagined space is best interpreted along the notion of 'auntie', in terms of a spinster or barren woman. She is neither Sister nor mother, but has gained a sexual identity as the 'local woman who was loved by a priest', an identity and reputation which carries some status. In terms of prestige, she has lost ground among other religious, but local people now relate to her more openly as a woman who has understood and experienced 'weakness'. Her Sister identity placed her in a social position among the 'top table' people, which was relinquished only temporarily when she was 'sent away', and to a degree this 'religious' identity remains

with her. She has regained the 'ethnic' sexual identity of her youth through the events which caused her dismissal from the congregation, and in negotiating her new imagined space when she returned to Boraja, she became a woman with a religious *and* a sexual history. The element of her imagined space which remained constant has been her professional training as an accountant. Throughout the changes in her imagined space when she initially infringed the terms of accountability of her 'Acholi' womanhood, and then breached those of her Sisterhood, she remained within the boundaries of her imagined space as a 'development' professional. It is this which has sustained her materially, and therefore to an extent sustained her culturally through the other fundamental shifts in her imagined space. She now considers herself 'past the marrying age', and protests "Why should I want to be second wife to a man just to end my days looking after him?" (Diary notes, March 1994).

Sarah can afford to remain independent in this way. The skills she acquired as a Sister have enabled her to maintain a professional career while Fr Bepe used his position of influence to find her a good position in Boraja. Had Sarah engaged in an illicit relationship with anyone less influential, she might not have maintained her independence so well. Other Sisters who have 'fallen from grace' in similar circumstances seldom maintain the social and economic position they enjoyed as Sisters. Therefore, Sarah's imagined space is now idiosyncratically her own, and illustrates how individual circumstances may radically alter a woman's space, allowing a new, nuanced and compromised space to be occupied, where a woman is neither Sister or mother, but an independent other.

7.5.1.c The 'star'

The congregation of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary continues to facilitate the career development of Ugandan women who might otherwise have found formal educational qualifications difficult to attain, and the following case study, drawn from fieldnotes from April to August 1994, is an example of one such young woman :

"Sister Miriam is one of the youngest sisters in the community of the Sisters of The Immaculate Heart of Mary in Boraja. She comes from near Soroti in the

east of Uganda and is one of very few Teso in the congregation, which attracts mainly northern women. In her late twenties, she is also the most highly educated sister in the entire congregation, and has trained in Makerere as a Medical Assistant, graduating with the top prize in her class. She is the 'star' of the order, although probably unaware of it herself. She is a petite eloquent, modest woman, who radiates goodwill and good sense in the hospital. I hear that she sometimes is cold-shouldered by the lugbara sisters in the community, who are jealous of her achievements. She has told me a few times that "things are sometimes difficult there in the community", but does not divulge why.

Older women in the parish predict that she will not remain a sister for long; "that one is far too pretty and too clever to remain with that community of foolish women" (fieldnotes April 1994), but Miriam speaks openly and often of her vocation and appears utterly committed to community life. She is keen to supplement her training further and take a full medical degree, and once she has taken her final vows in 1995, she will return to Makerere to complete her studies."

To the outsider, Miriam appears very different to her community companions, in appearance, attitude and intellect. Also, the sincerity of her vocation, still fresh after seven years is impressive, while other Sisters are less so. The further she commits herself towards perpetual vows, the further her training progresses, and I question whether the congregation or Miriam is gaining most from her vocation. Her salary will be among the highest earned in the congregation and will help considerably in community finances. Under her vow of obedience, she will work and live wherever the Mother General decides she should. As such, she is a valuable pawn in the Mother General's negotiations with the bishops of the dioceses in whose medical and educational institutes the Sisters are employed. People outside the congregation cannot explain why she should 'sacrifice' herself to a childless life, since she would by now fall into the new social class of professional women in Uganda who have careers, husbands and families. The only explanation, and indeed the one Miriam herself provides, lies in her vocation. "I am just called to a life in Christ, where I can somehow help in the suffering of others, that is all" (Diary notes, September 5th 1994).

Miriam is creating a new imagined space for herself which is unusual in several respects. Soon, she will rank with the male doctors of the country; female doctors are rare enough in Uganda and the only other Sisters who are doctors are foreign

missionary sisters. As such, in 'development' discourse she is a visible, modern, successful, educated and empowered woman. As long as she functions as a competent medical practitioner she will remain within the terms of accountability of her imagined space informed by this discourse. It is unlikely, due to the social circumstances of her background, that Miriam could have entered medical school, except from within the boundaries of a religious.

In 'Catholic' terms, she is a religious Sister modelled on the Virgin Mary - chaste, celibate, 'poor' and obedient. Once she takes perpetual vows, and as long as she fulfils these vows, she remains within the terms of accountability informed by the 'Catholic' dimension of her imagined space. The boundary definition of 'obedience' incorporates a certain potential contradiction with the 'development' element of her space, since this demands obedience to the patriarchal church hierarchy, *above* the 'modern, empowered, visible woman' role of her 'developed' space. Finally, the elements of her space which spring from the ethnic setting of her childhood (Teso) are obscured as the other two discourses assume dominance. She has denied the Teso role of wife and mother (although retaining strong identity as sister and daughter) in favour of the asexual 'Auntie' identity. Miriam's discursive repertoire is more adventurous than others in her religious community, but more 'bounded' by religious codes of accountability than other Teso women or female doctors. At this stage, Miriam is very much an exception among Ugandan women religious, but it is likely that she will be the first of a new group of Sister/Doctors, rather than the last.

The three spaces I have described, one figurative and two personal, illustrate how individual and visual objects can be symbolic of entire social and cultural patterns of change and conflict, and also how particular women's imagined spaces can be defined by their limits, to be explored and breached. Belonging to a congregation of African Sisters is demonstrated as being both liberating and confining. I now move on to discuss the ways in which these imagined spaces occupied by women can directly influence the implementation of development projects in mission healing.

7.6 Ownership and Accountability

The two issues of ownership and accountability emerge again as central to my exploration of the relationship between the Sisters and the hospital, and it is in this section that I draw connections between the issue of Sisters' sexuality and how this affects the running of the hospital and the implementation of development projects there. I explore the boundaries of accountability of the imagined space of an African Sister to demonstrate their different cultural dimensions and implications.

7.6.1 Ownership

The issue of ownership of the hospital is less legally ambiguous than BDSI's (it clearly belongs to the diocese), but its history is marked by several key 'owners', each with some responsibility for its present situation. Initially, the site belonged to the Comboni mission, then to the diocese, while the dispensary/clinic/hospital was run and funded by Europeans. Fr Bepe oversaw the reconstruction of the hospital, as part of his 'Boraja is Beautiful' campaign, and this was funded by the Italian NGO, CUAMM (although the German NGO Misereor struggled to secure the contract)³⁰. He continued to act as administrator until 1994 even though he left the hospital in 1991.

The relationship between the Sisters and the hospital is ill-defined, informal and strangely intimate. It is said locally, and by sisters and hospital staff alike, that "the Sisters own the hospital". In fact, the Diocese owns the hospital, and the Bishop is chairman of the hospital board, and the Boraja community of the Sisters of The Immaculate Heart of Mary merely has several members employed by the hospital. In terms of communal discourse then, 'ownership' of the hospital is more immediately significant than the claims of the Comboni's, NGOs or the diocese, which is why it is the imagined spaces that the sisters occupy and negotiate which have such direct

³⁰ The 'Italian Connection' proved to be stronger than the relatively recent German one, and that the patron of CUAMM was also the bishop of the Italian Diocese of Padova meant that the Italian missionary ties of Arua Diocese were sustained. While I was in Boraja, he visited West Nile in his capacity as patron of CUAMM, and it was announced that he would be taking the local bishop's place and confirming the youth of the parish who had been prepared for this sacrament. That he presided at a local religious celebration while inspecting progress at a project, illustrates how fused the boundaries between church and project remain, and how local people continue to accept the authority and celebrity of overseas clergy.

impact on how the hospital functions.

Since Fellini left the parish in 1991, there was an absence of hands-on administration, which was addressed by several individuals. From 1992 to 1994, the void Fellini had left was filled by 'Sister Matron'. Her story illustrates vividly how the association between Christian and western medicine makes imagined spaces of opportunity available to women who chose to take religious vows, and how the cultural negotiations that they make within this imagined space may have implications for the missionary medical endeavour.

Sister Matron is a large, energetic and impressive lugbara woman in her late thirties, who is both a member of the convent community, and the Matron of Boraja Hospital. Her title, (Sister Matron) aptly illustrates the overlapping relationship between the community and the hospital. She entered the congregation after her primary education, and had qualified as a registered nurse in Kampala. As such, she was one of only a handful of qualified nursing staff in the hospital, and earned a good local salary, which supported the community. In early 1992 she was appointed matron of the hospital, a post which was principally a nursing position, with some minor administrative duties.

7.6.1.a Administrative handover

When CUAMM personnel left the hospital in 1992, the building project was not quite completed, and the problem of how to employ the hospital's builders, carpenters and equipment arose. In 1992 Fellini and the Bishop requested a volunteer from VMM, a European agency which had a history of sending volunteers to Boraja, and a maintenance engineer was promised for early 1993. However, during 1992, Sister Matron, virtually unsupervised in Fellini's absence, took over much of the financial administration of the hospital, procuring everything from essential drugs to daily newspapers which had to be collected from Arua. The hospital safe was removed to the convent, she installed her friends in the dispensary, and used the maintenance and compound workers for work in the convent. She came

to command considerable authority in the hospital and devoted herself to administrative duties rather than nursing responsibilities, leading to a drop in both standards and morale among the staff and wards.

When we arrived in Boraja, we were told that the ‘big woman’ at the hospital was Sister Matron, “She is the boss. She owns the hospital” was a common local introduction to this formidable woman. She was not pleased that Michael arrived to reorganise the workshops. Since Fellini had left for Arua and the medical superintendent was in Kampala, he asked Sister Matron if he could have a desk in an office somewhere, and her response is documented below :

“Michael isn’t convinced that he’s wanted at the hospital. He came back today asking if TB was infectious. I laughed and said ‘of course, that’s why they have isolation wards’, and he sighed. This Sister Matron has given him an empty room in the TB ward down at the very back of the hospital. Apparently the place is packed. He can’t get anywhere asking people where things are or what to do, they all say ‘Ask Sister Matron’. Maybe it’ll be better when Sarah Orache, the accountant gets back next month” (Diary notes, February 5th 1993).

At this stage then, the ‘ownership’ of the hospital, by default, is in Sister Matron’s hands. Due to poor administration (by the Medical Superintendent, CUAMM and the Administrator, principally), she occupies a powerful space that she does not vacate readily. To complete this narrative, I now move on to consider the ways in which accountability, when exercised, finally resolved the issue of ownership and revealed how fundamental questions of sexual and cultural identity can impinge upon the overall administration of ‘big project’ institutions like Boraja Hospital.

7.6.2 Accountability

Sister Matron's reluctance to locate Michael in the workshops was soon explained when a few days after his arrival he was found an office beside the workshop stores by the accountant. He found the carpenters frustrated and idle, their equipment unused, despite the wood store being full of fine timber. “But that timber belongs to the Sisters” they said, explaining that it was not for hospital use. A day of confusion eventually sealed one of Sister Matron’s personal loopholes in the hospital’s administration, as detailed in this diary abstract for March 14th 1993 :

“Michael went to the convent and asked the Mother Superior of the community

when she would be requiring the timber, "What timber ? We have no building here" she replied, laughing at his stupid question. He returned to Sister Matron and asked what hospital project the timber was intended for, since he could see no construction work in plan. She began to talk about the convent when Michael said he'd already seen Sr. Assumpta, and she just looked at him. "Then it is for the hospital, it must be remaining" she replied eventually, "It is up to you what to do with it", she turned on her heel and went off. He's still not sure what this means, but the men in the workshop were watching this encounter and have been laughing all day. God knows".

This small incident reveals how Sister Matron began to lose her grip on the hospital budget³¹. Deprived of an easily concealable source of money (in the workshop), Sister Matron took sole control of the hospital's drugs accounts, and made several trips to Kampala to purchase drugs, incurring hefty expenses. Despite the trips, the hospital ran out of essential drugs in December 1993 and again in May 1994, necessitating requests for emergency funding from CUAMM, Red Cross and, as was locally told in tones of shame "even Protestants!"³². Several people petitioned the bishop and Fr Fellini personally about Sister Matron's spending and behaviour, but nothing was done. In late 1993, serious discrepancies in the hospital's budget were brought to the bishop's attention by the accountant, and it became common knowledge locally that Sister Matron was responsible for mis-spending hospital funds. However, since the senior nurses and pharmacist were members of her community, and since an accusation of dishonesty had to carry irrefutable evidence, she was cushioned from overt criticism for some time.

In May of 1994, it forcefully came to the bishop's attention that Sister Matron was involved in an intimate relationship with an influential trader in town (Mr Kaba), a man who also acted a Headmaster in a State Secondary school³³. Within days, a salacious story of love letters, romantic trips to the Ssesse Islands (under cover of the

³¹ Many of the events of 1993 and 1994 were bewildering at the time, and only made sense in the light of certain information which became known in May 1994, and it is in this light that I relate the rest of the story.

³² Aware of the drugs shortage in the hospital, friends of ours working for the Church of Uganda redirected some of their medical funding towards Boraja Hospital, on the grounds that it was being used to treat refugees from the fighting in Southern Sudan. The doctors at the hospital were sincerely grateful, but we heard that some administrators in the diocese were ashamed that Protestants had to 'bale out' their star Catholic hospital.

³³ The news reached us through Sarah Orache, the hospital accountant who was told by the sister of the man's wife, who undoubtedly knew that Sarah would spread the story quickly.

hospital's drugs trips to Kampala no less), a wronged and vengeful wife and the untold generosity of this lowly Sister Matron threatened to make a laughing stock of the Diocese and the Sisters. Kaba's wife had discovered a box of love-letters from Sister Matron, had photocopied them and taken the letters to the bishop's house where she demanded that action be taken against Sister Matron who was breaking up her Christian marriage. The letters were also brought to the Mother Superior of the community in Boraja, who read them, weeping on the verandah. The couple were reportedly building a house on the southern side of Arua, and Sister Matron had already provided much of the building materials for the construction. She had allegedly paid the school fees of some of his ten children (from two marriages), and in her letters, had expressed the wish to be 'mother' to all of them when she left the convent to be with him.

The Mother General of the congregation travelled with her entourage from Gulu, and immediate and prolonged meetings were held in Arua and Boraja. The sisters of the wronged wife ensured that the news spread to every corner of West Nile, while both Sister Matron and Mr Kaba denied everything. There was several weeks of tension, rumour and communal incredulity as the senior administrators of the hospital, the diocese and the congregation met to discuss the problem and decide which steps to take. 'Witnesses' to encounters between the two accused were summoned, including Onziga the driver of the hospital. "They said to me, 'What did you see?', and I said I saw nothing! It is true, in Kampala and Arua I hardly saw the woman at all!" Onziga explained to us after his ordeal with 'the inquisition' (Diary notes, June 2nd 1994).

During this time, Sister Matron was subdued for only a few days. Then her behaviour changed in ways that local women noticed immediately. She began to walk with her bag on her head, in the traditional way of local women. She started to tie a kitenge of Zairean fabric around her hips, over her uniform, and wore this informal attire all day, along with her shiny red patent shoes, normally reserved for feasts and important occasions.

This behaviour bewildered most observers in the mission, who found it both hilarious and sad. I interpret Sister Matron's actions, as they were observed by me and related to me in terms of the imagined space she occupied. The commitment and compromise of the imagined space of the religious life was beginning to weigh more heavily than the potential and opportunity the space offered when she was much younger. Despite the responsibility and respect she has earned as a sister and a nurse, roles which satisfy the 'Catholic' and 'development' dimensions of her space as a modern woman, Sister Matron still craves the maternal and sexual dimensions of life as a woman that are denied in the convent. Her relationship with Kaba is a tremendous risk for her to take, and was facilitated by the incoherent administration at the hospital at precisely the same time as she questioned and tested the boundaries of the imagined space she had chosen while young. The material advantages of her position were made available to Kaba, perhaps in symbolic lieu of the fertility rights that she could not guarantee.

The eventual outcome of the saga was the redeployment of Sister Matron to a dispensary run by the congregation in the border town of Busia, and her replacement with an Alur Sister, who had just completed her 'double training' in midwifery and nursing.

In a sense, the story of this stage in Sister Matron's life demonstrates how several contributing issues can accumulate in one situation until a crisis point is reached that demands casualties. She was undertrained for the position of authority that the Diocese and congregation placed her in, and with the uncoordinated handover of the 'project' hospital from the Italian NGO to the Ugandan Diocese, via a departing and disgruntled Italian missionary priest, opportunities for mismanagement arose. Combined with the latent cultural and social unease surrounding the suppressed sexuality and unfulfilled maternal inclinations of many Ugandan Sisters (manifest in Sister Matron's relationship with Kaba), the situation in Boraja Hospital and in the convent in these few years demonstrates vividly some of the tensions in contemporary Catholic missions. These events took place against a background where the hospital is a site of opportunity, conflict and failure ; it is not a

'settled' cultural space, but one of adjustment and unease. Sister Matron's own negotiation of her imagined space reflects this same adjustment and unease.

The most important point that I wish to draw from this narrative is the fact that Sister Matron was finally held accountable for her actions as a 'sexual' Sister, rather than those as an embezzling Sister. This highlights how the different cultural dimensions of her imagined space operate different codes of accountability. The dominant 'religious' element of her imagined space (defined in her vows) and the way in which it structured the other terms of accountability in her life meant that her infringement of professional 'development' codes of practice went unchallenged (as it was within Diocesan and congregational structures). It was only when her personal re-negotiation of the 'lugbara' dimensions of her imagined space (in particular to consider a sexual and maternal role) conflicted directly with her religious terms of accountability that her boundaries were publicly threatened.

Although questions were raised about her administrative behaviour in the hospital, and 'evidence' supplied of irregularities in her expenditure, it was only when a sensational and public accusation regarding her sexual behaviour was made that the machinations of the church responded to admonish her. It would seem that the inefficiencies of the diocesan administration of the hospital allowed Sister Matron to explore the power within her imagined space as Sister/Matron to the point of embezzlement, but that when brought to the public eye, that it was her breach of the sexual boundaries of her imagined space that were deemed unacceptable. The institutions which define her membership of this imagined space are on firm ground in their guidelines about the sexuality of sisters, but seem to be rather less specific on the limits of power and financial accountability inherent in a Sister's imagined space.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to illustrate how women religious in Boraja occupy contested imagined spaces which are evolving in contemporary dimensions among the defined roles which have been, and continue to be made available to them. The connections between Christian and lugbara notions of healing and wellbeing act as a

background for the dramas of everyday life at Boraja hospital, and establish that the hospital, where the Sisters negotiate their own imagined spaces is itself a place of contest. The hospital represents one 'development' location where these imagined spaces, have an impact, and one which is not measured (or measurable) by project administrators from outside. The immersion of the Sisters of this congregation in the hospital's administration illustrates how their imagined spaces, already very different to the women around them, are areas of potential, commitment, compromise and promise. However, they are spaces with certain clearly defined boundaries, and it is the public transgression of these boundaries which effect change in the institution, or in the imagined space of the 'transgressor'. The negotiation within the imagined spaces of these 'powerful' Sisters very often addresses the inherent conflict between the 'religious' space they occupy as Sisters, and the 'lugbara' space they reject as women Sisters, and pivots on the expression, occupation and denial of the roles defined by female sexuality locally.

In the hospital, the entire missionary and developmental strategy of paternalistic management created administrative voids which were open to misuse by people in positions of local authority who were in the process of questioning their imagined spaces. In the case of Sister Matron, it was her pursuit of a sexual and maternal dimension to her imaged space outside congregational boundaries, that brought attention to her abuse of her administrative role. This exploration of women's imagined spaces in the hospital draws attention to the contested sexual spaces that religious men and clergy also occupy, and how, in their interaction with women, and their administration of development project funds, imagined spaces are contested and transformed. This issue is developed further in the following chapter.

Table 7.1 Nursing Staff at Boraja Hospital 1993

Nurse	No	Training	Uniform	Ave Salary Ush/month
Double Trained	0	S4 + 4 years	White dress Red belt	28,000
Registered Nurse	3	S4 + 3 years	White dress Yellow belt	25,000
Registered Midwife	0	S4 + 3 years	White dress Yellow belt	25,000
Enroled Nurse	5	S4 + 2 years	White dress Blue belt	20,000
Enroled Midwife	6	S4 +2 years	White dress White belt	20,000
Nursing Aides	39	P7 + 8 wks	Blue dress Black belt	14,000

Source: Boraja Hospital Annual Report 1993

Table 7.2 Boraja Hospital Staff Establishment 31/12/93

Medical Staff		Laboratory	
Medical Officers	3	Officers	1
Medical Assistants	1	Attendants	1
Nursing/Midwifery		Theatre	
Double trained	0	Anaesthetic Assts	0
Registered Nurses	3	Attendants	5
Registered Midwives	0		
Enroled Nurses	5		
Enroled Midwives	6		
Nursing Aides	39	Physiotherapy	
		Physiotherapist	0
Paramedical		Support Staff	
Lab Technicians	0	Administration	6
Lab Assistants	1	Maintenance	10
Lab Attendants	4	Compound	8
Pharmacy		Drivers	1
Pharmacist	0	Watchmen	6
Assistants	0	Laundry	5
Dispensers	5	Ward Maids	4
X-Ray		Cleaners	3
Radiographers	0	Cooks	2
Attendants	2		
Dental			
Dentist	0		
Assistants (P/T)	1		
Total Staff			126

Source: Boraja Hospital Annual
Report 1993

Table 7.3 Morbidity Rates Boraja Hospital 1993

(The Ten Most Common Causes of Admission)

Disease	Admissions	%
Malaria	4909	49.95
Intestinal worms	1050	10.5
Respiratory Diseases	920	10.58
Trauma	852	8.58
Diarrhoeal tract disease	514	5.18
Urinary tract disease	488	4.92
Musculo – skeletal disease	437	4.4
Skin disease	288	2.86
Pregnancy complications	270	2.71
Anaemia	204	2.05

Source: Boraja Hospital Annual Report 1993

Table 7.4: Listing the major events in the establishment of Roman Catholic religious congregations in Uganda 1979 - 1994

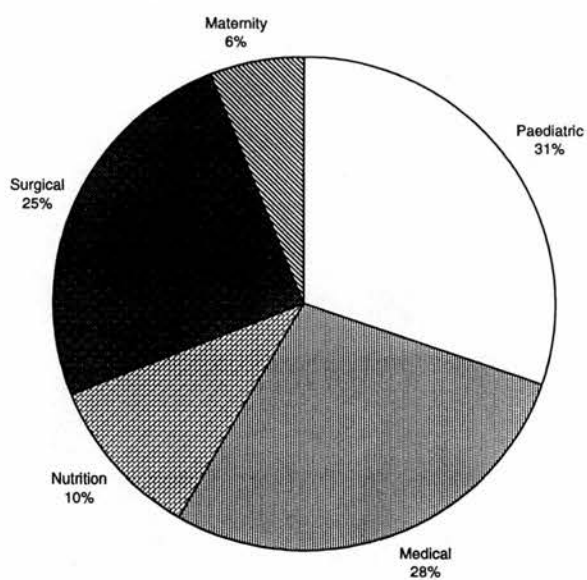
1879	Arrival of White Fathers in Buganda
1893	First Seminary opened at Villa Maria, Buddu Province
1894	Mill Hill Fathers arrive in Uganda
1899	Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (White Sisters) arrive 1899 Bannabikira (Daughters of Mary) founded (UG)
1901	First religious professions of Bannabikira
1903	Franciscan Sisters of Mill Hill arrive at Nsambya
1910	Verona Fathers travel along the Nile to Gondokoro and Nimule, and settle at Koba (in Acholi)
1912	The Sister of Mary Reparatrix (the Blue Sisters) establish a contemplative congregation at Entebbe
1913	Ordinations of the First Two Ugandan Priests
1918	Pie madri della Nigrizia invited to Northern Uganda by the Verona Fathers to take charge of girls' education, a dispensary and orphanage
1925	Ursuline Sisters from Holland arrive Rubaga Cathedral consecrated
1926	Little Sisters of Saint Francis founded (UG) The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix founded (UG) Bannakaroli (Brothers of Charles Lwanga) founded (UG)
1929	The Brothers of Christian Instruction open a "Juvenate" for the education and training for the noviate at Rubaga
1932	Brothers of the Sacred Heart arrive to teach in Gulu
1934	Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Mary founded at Ladonga (West Nile) (UG)
1937	Sisters of Good Council arrive at Mbarara Bannyatereza founded at Fort Portal (UG)
1939	Fr. Joseph Kiwanuka (W.F.) ordained Vicar Apostolic of Masaka, becoming the "first African Bishop of modern times"
1942	Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary founded in Gulu (UG)
1943	African Sisters of Good Council founded in

	Mbarara (UG)
1947	Xavarian Brothers arrive in Gulu
1953	The Hierarchy of East Africa established
1954	The Little Sisters of Jesus founded at Rubaga (UG) Poor Clares arrive at Mbarara
1955	Medical Missionaries of Mary arrive at Masaka The Ladies of Mary arrive in Mbarara and Fort Portal Holy Cross Sisters arrive at Fort Portal Sisters of St.Pater Claver take over the press at Kisubi
1957	Franciscan Sisters of Breda arrive at Mbarara
1959	Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament arrive at Masaka Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament go to Tororo Cistercian Sisters arrive at Masaka
1960	Canonesses of St. Augustine arrive at Rubaga Sisters of Perpetual Adoration founded in Arua (UG) the first entirely African contemplative congregation in Uganda
1962	Medical Mission Sisters arrive in Fort Portal Sisters of the Sacred Heart arrive at Masaka Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary arrive at Toro
1964	Canonisation of Uganda Martyrs
1968	Apostles of Jesus, a missionary congregation for local clergy founded (UG)
1969	Pope Paul VI visits Uganda
1971	Missionary Congregation of Mary Mother of the Church founded in Lira (UG)
1973	Brothers of St.Joseph the Worker founded in Fort Portal (UG)
1993	Pope John Paul II visits Uganda
1994	African Synod held in Rome

(based primarily on Tourigny, 1979)

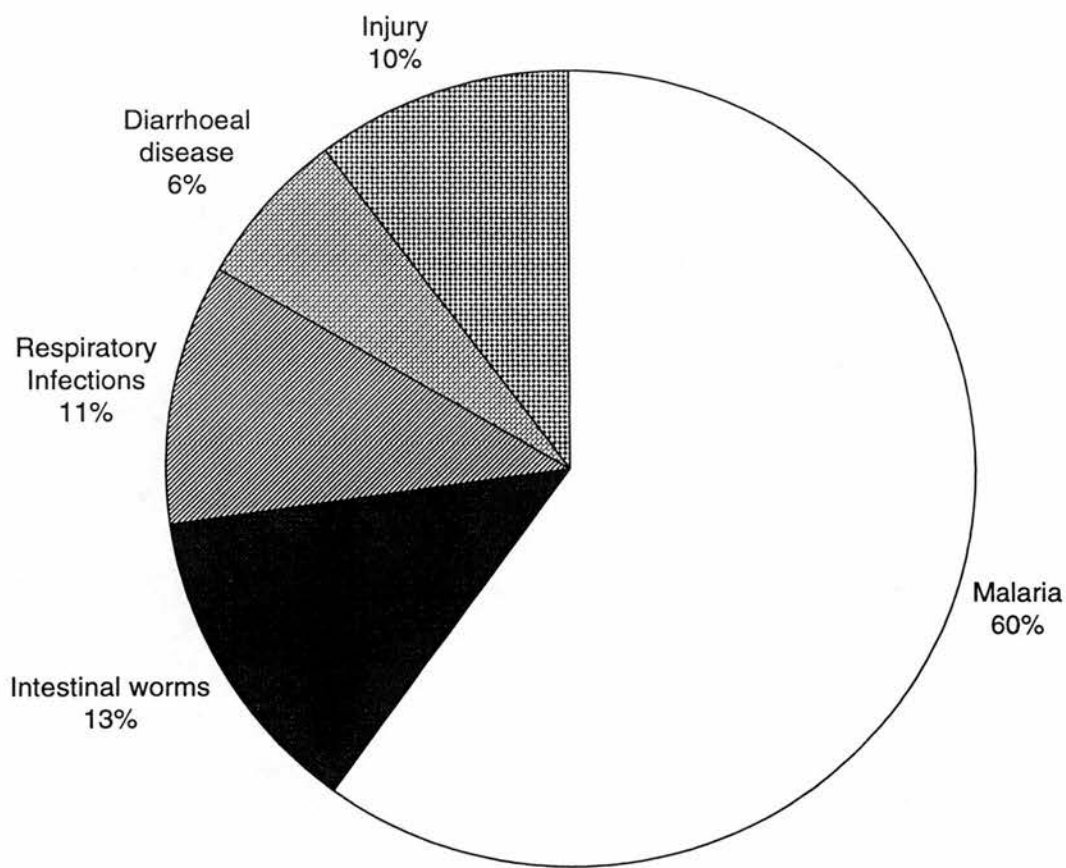
(UG) denotes a Ugandan Congregation

Fig. 7.1 Bed Allocation in Wards of Boraja Hospital 1993



Source: Boraja Hospital Annual Report 1993

Fig. 7.2 Morbidity Pattern in Outpatients Department



Source: Boraja Hospital Annual report, 1993

Chapter Eight : Testing the boundaries ; the male clergy of the mission

8.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to examine the boundaries of the imagined spaces of men who live in missions ; the male clergy of the diocese. In the first main section of the chapter (8.2), the way in which the principal characteristic of their imagined space has been represented as one of 'vulnerability' is explored and contested, and the ways in which the defining cultural terms of accountability which frame their imagined spaces operate is described. The imagined spaces of the male clergy in Arua Diocese are not simple, and they are occupied, negotiated and contested by many 'types' of men. My discussion aims to establish how the occupation of imagined spaces by male clergy impacts upon women in the diocese, and how certain women's spaces are defined in relation to men's. The role of sexuality is foregrounded in this discussion, since it is significant in how male clergy behave in development contexts and in how they relate to women. I also examine the issue of 'response' to the breaching of boundaries by male clergy, and at some of the ways in which new spaces are constructed. I present case studies of four male clergy of Arua Diocese, whose stories represent various aspects of this discussion, both as missionary (8.3) and as lugbara (8.4) diocesan clergy.

8.2 Naked Temptation

The 'traditional costumes' of the lugbara, as described by both Middleton (1962) and Kapita (1978), consisted mainly of animal skins wrapped around the loins of both men and women. Certain parts of the skins, feathers and beads of the traditional lugbara costume were associated with victory in battle, fertility and family position. It was a means of dressing that was wholly appropriate to the climate and cultures of West Nile, but which was an affront to the European missionaries when they arrived in the 1920s. It became one of the immediate objectives of the missionaries to dress the

local people, who were told, rather like Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden (and very probably in terms of this creation story), that they were 'naked', and moreover, that to be naked was 'heathen', 'pagan' and 'sinful'¹.

Among the Comboni missionaries who evangelised northern Uganda in the early years of this century, the nakedness of the indigenous people was clearly of concern, evidenced in a letter from Colombaroli back to the Father General in 1910:

"One of the greatest difficulties, and one which makes us think a lot, I'm afraid it is women. Here there are many women, and they are so naked and so full of effrontery that Monsignor himself says that he has never seen the like of them anywhere else. Perhaps it should have been better that before we came here, should have come the nuns to teach a little bit of modesty to these women. Most Reverend Father, in these lands, if we manage to keep our spirits up, it is a great grace of our Lord."

His colleague, Fondatore also reports in the same year:

"Men and young people, cover themselves with goat skins and even with cloth, if they can get hold of any, whilst children go around naked. In general, the population is more keen on cloth than on things like beads and ornaments, and this makes us hope that in time they will all want to get dressed".

These excerpts reveal several underlying attitudes to the missionary desire to cover the bare skin of local people. It is clear that missionaries were offering material goods to local people, and that gifts of cloth were accompanied with the hope that it would be used to cover their bodies. The local people were not embarrassed at each other's nakedness: it was the

¹ In Genesis 3:7, Adam and Eve realise their nakedness and dress themselves with leaves. Miles 1992:xi reminds us that "Nakedness in the state of sin represents the shame and pain associated with

male missionaries who were embarrassed, and particularly concerned with the nakedness of women rather than of men or children. Their comments suggest that in traditional dress, the women posed a threat to the missionary celibate, chaste and holy life. In other words, the missionaries were tempted by the appearance of local women, and the desire to 'dress' the local population can be seen as a response to this temptation.

In covering the bodies of women, the missionaries were able to claim biblical support but they also constructed a relationship between male missionaries and local women based on notions of vulnerability and risk. From the outset, the assumption was made that it was the local women who placed the vulnerable bodies and souls of male missionaries in mortal danger. Women posed a sinful risk to these vulnerable men, a risk which could be removed by dressing the 'naked' bodies of the temptress women. The women were constructed as 'Eve' figures in the sexual temptation of holy missionary men.

8.2.1 Covering Eves, Creating Marys

The social constructions, underlying the missionary endeavour to 'dress' local populations incorporate several Victorian European attitudes to gender and sexual relations, which are only evident when one considers that female (and male) 'traditional costumes' did not render local communities into states of constant sexual temptation and sexual chaos. That bare skin should denote sexual availability and intimacy is entirely a notion which has origins in temperate climates where people need to dress to engage in everyday business, indoors and out (Thomson 1993)². The time when the Comboni's were evangelising West Nile was the post-war era in Europe, a time when Puritanism and discipline were rejected by 'modern' society.

punishment (for the Fall)".

² Thomson (1993:26) discusses how Moses laid down rules about the undressing of members of the opposite sex in front of each other, from which subsequent Christian societies have only slightly deviated. He also discusses how different societies construct nudity in varying degrees of dress, decoration and adornment.

Fashion and entertainment became relaxed and Macmillan (1979) reports that there was a rise in illegitimacy of thirty percent. Against this background, the missionary endeavour of Europeans in Africa was particularly focused against the implications of energetic dancing and nakedness, viewed in their threatening European context. Therefore the public and everyday traditional dress of local women was interpreted as sexually provocative to these foreign men who were simply not accustomed to the sight of bodies³. In local custom, the appreciation of the beauty of bodies was certainly part of courtship rites, but only in certain contexts, and usually in association with other physical attributes, such as agility in dancing. The missionary assumption that 'nakedness' induced sexual temptation was weighted by their European idea of the sinfulness of sexual relations before Christian marriage. In encouraging local people to dress, missionaries also hoped to remove the temptation to sin, irrespective of whether bare skin encouraged sexual relations for local people, or whether such sexual relations were sinful for them.

Another western notion implicit in the covering up of local women is the enlightenment-based prioritisation of sight above the other sensory faculties as the root and 'proof' of experience (Lucas 1997). That European missionaries believed that simply by 'dressing' local women, that all temptation to enter sexual relations with women would be removed, reveals how visually centred their appreciation of sensory and sexual experience was, in marked contrast to local African practices.

The 'dressing' of local people accompanied the male missionary construction of themselves as 'vulnerable', and had two important implications for women missionaries and for local people. Colombaroli expressed regret that 'the nuns' had not preceded the arrival of the

³ Miles (1992) has discussed the western association of naked bodies, Christianity, temptation and sin, especially as they are represented in art and discourse after the sixteenth century.

missionary fathers, 'to teach a little bit of modesty to these women'. This statement carries the assumption that the female religious were in a social position to 'teach' the European concept of modesty more effectively than their male counterparts, and that the modesty of the local women should precede their evangelisation. The work which the fathers and brothers did was considered more important than that of the sisters, and it would have been in order to enhance the fathers' work that the sisters would have 'taught modesty'. By the 1950s, the 'distraction' from their work continued, as recalled by Sarah Orache, who grew up in a northern mission station in the 1950s:

"..the girls didn't put anything up there (their chests). They tie a piece of cloth around their legs, and what the missionary used to say, what tempted them so much was the breasts - like those big girls with breasts standing - and when they are walking they are very tempting.... The missionary started finding a way of making what we call 'kititi' for the catechumens⁴ they started introducing it because they say that they get very much tempted seeing the girls with their breasts (laughs). They say that really, all the time that you are teaching, all that you see are those girls, the breasts are sitting there"(Sarah Orache, Tape 12, June 1994).

Also, it is assumed that the sisters would not be as vulnerable as the priests and brothers to the sexual temptation posed by naked local people. Naked local men were not the same threat to the chastity of missionary women as naked local women were to missionary men⁵. The assumption also carried the racialised notion that white European women were not sexual initiators, whereas black African women were easily viewed as being sexually predatory⁶. The implication of these assumptions is that even where temptation might exist, that women were more in control of their sexual appetite than men, and this reinforced the premise that missionary men needed to be 'protected' from the temptation that local women whose skin

⁴ People being instructed for baptism.

⁵ It is worth noting that these constructions were made entirely within a heterosexual context.

⁶ This idea is developed further by Gilman (1985) who reminds us that the black woman served widely as an icon of sexually transmitted illness in the late nineteenth century European imagination.

was bare posed. The construction of male missionaries' vulnerability was thus reinforced by their assumed contrast to female missionaries. All of these assumptions and implications follow the imagery discussed in chapter two surrounding the female religious figures of Eve and Mary. The dressing of local people, and particularly the covering of 'breasts was part of the missionary reconstruction of African women in the image of Mary, mother of God. Dressing was part of evangelism and salvation, connected to sin and holiness, and it also inadvertently became an indicator of material wealth.

8.2.2 Introducing a measure of poverty

The other implication of 'dressing' people who had not considered themselves naked was the creation of a new material status connected to being Christian⁷. In Boraja, the first Christians in the county recall that clothes were among the first gifts given by the missionaries, and the 'Mission Boys', Charles and Cici, remember also that clothes were given to them from Europe (Tape 5). Sarah Orache, reflected that once the people at the missions began to wear 'smart' European clothes, everyone wanted to wear such clothes;

".. and you know when the missionaries came and decided we were naked, they gave us dresses and clothes to cover ourselves, so now, you cannot move without clothes, which is an extra expenditure for the people. Before, they did not have to buy, but now there is the fashions and the beautiful kitenge, and it is making people ashamed and poor. Before, we were not, or so this is what my father tells me and he remembers very well." (Sarah Orache, Tape 11, June 1994).

⁷ The costume recommended for 'Christian' woman was an ornate voluminous full-length dress called a 'gomez', which required many lengths of fabric and which resembled the designs introduced by German missionaries to Namibia and by the French White Fathers to Buganda (Pettifer and Bradbury 1990). Therefore, the association between 'Christian' dressing, modesty and wealth became evident when only baptised women who were able to afford the fabric and tailoring required for a gomez were considered modestly attired. In West Nile, where the cash economy has never been as well established as in other parts of Uganda, fewer women owned gomez dresses and even today, they are worn only by 'top table' women for feasts and special occasions.

There is evidence that contemporary local scholars have analysed the missionary desire to dress African people as part of both colonial and evangelising agendas. Kapita (1978), in her dissertation on the demise of traditional costume among the lugbara, claims that by insisting that schoolchildren wear uniforms, the missionaries introduced habitual dressing to the youth, and therefore assured the decline of the traditional costume. Being dressed in the European sense was therefore an integral part of the missionary package.

8.2.3 Risky women and vulnerable men

At this stage let us situate these notions of 'vulnerability' and 'risk' within the construction of imagined spaces in the mission place. In the contexts I have discussed already, an essential element of the imagined space of male clergy is their presumed 'vulnerability' to sexually predatory local women. The terms of accountability which define the boundaries of the imagined space of modern mission clergy incorporate elements of 'local', 'Catholic' and 'development' cultural discourses, and the characteristic of vulnerability does not apply in all of these. While in the 'Catholic' and the missionary 'local' cultures, male European priests may still be constructed as 'at risk' among African women, in 'development' discourse these men are not considered vulnerable. For local clergy, while perhaps considered vulnerable to the 'wiles of Eve' in Catholic discourse, they are constructed as powerful in development terms, while their identity as sexual lugbara males is ambiguous. While it is accepted (even expected) by local people that lugbara priests may be sexually active, it is seldom in terms of being 'seduced' by predatory local women, but rather in the terms of accountability within which other lugbara men operate sexually. These come into play when the 'private' becomes 'public' in the event of pregnancy, and in such cases the boundaries of accountability are tested within both lugbara and Catholic codes.

I would contend that in these cases, where the testing of boundaries generates discord, the 'development' cultural element of priests' imagined spaces does not remain apart from those which are blatantly contested. Often it is precisely these priests' access to material and financial resources (in their 'development' roles) that becomes implicated in the material resolution of the discord.

A final consideration in the construction of the characteristics of the imagined spaces of these men is how the 'powerful' positions they occupy in mission places and in West Nile in general are manifest. Although there are other powerful men in West Nile, in business and in politics, Catholic male clergy are powerful in religious and secular terms. The construction of their sexuality as 'celibates' does not negate it, but places it in coded and obscured social and cultural spaces where it is not overtly expressed. Communal discourse in the Catholic culture operates at the 'official' level of denial, but development discourse draws on managerial analysis of workplace sexual strategies that increasingly recognise that sexuality is an "ordinary and frequent process of public life" (Roper 1996: 221). Work by analysts such as Burrell and Hearn (1989) demonstrates that expressions of sexuality in environments where power is exercised are integral to understanding how this power works. As much is true of the powerful male clergy of Arua Diocese - even though in Catholic discourse they are assumed to be non-sexual beings, their sexuality pervades their relations with the women and the men they exercise power with or upon. Although Roper remarks "there has been a tendency to perceive sexuality as problematic mainly where men and women are" (1996: 222), he argues that there is also a case for analysing the 'homosocial desires' that operate among males in working environments, especially those where a 'masculine ethic' prevails⁸.

⁸ While this would be an interesting perspective to examine in the all-male missionary communities of Africa, it is not my present concern.

Therefore, although not explicitly evident in the communal discourse that informs the imagined spaces of priests, I would argue that sexuality (and the expression, struggle, denial, pleasure or whatever of it) is an essential element of all the cultural elements which define these spaces. In terms of how they exercise power therefore, charm, charisma and 'pulling power' all play an important part.

Within the context of these male imagined spaces, I will now explore these constructions of vulnerability and risk and the terms of accountability that are brought into play, through the case studies of four male religious who are presently working in the Diocese of Arua, and who at some stage had a connection with Boraja. In addition to the deconstruction of the imagined spaces they occupy, I analyse the terms of accountability for each, and how these are exercised in varying ways, especially in relation to their 'illicit' relationships with women. The differences and similarities between contemporary missionary males and Ugandan male clergy are examined in these terms.

8.3 Missionary males

While the number of missionaries in West Nile is in decline, the Fathers and Brothers of the Comboni order remain an influential and significant group among the diocesan religious. Although in 1993 they represented only 30% of the diocesan clergy, their presence is more significant than this figure might suggest. In 1994, Comboni Fathers held the key posts of Pastoral Co-ordinator and Religious Education Co-ordinator, while running the Procure in Arua, and administering several parishes. The majority of these men are Italian, and most of them are over 50 years of age. For many, West Nile is the most permanent home they have known in their lives, but it is a place where they are perpetual 'Outsiders'. A few have worked particularly hard to construct buildings, facilities and material evidence of

their evangelisation efforts, while others have worked for decades teaching in colleges and schools, preferring to see the evidence of their work in less material terms. The two Comboni men whom I present as case studies are supposed to occupy are both Italian, in their early 50s and have been in West Nile since the late 1960s.

8.3.1 Fr Bepe Fellini: Sexual and valuable, the 'Gold Card' priest

In this section I discuss the case of one of the most influential missionary priests in Boraja in recent years⁹. In Boraja, Fr Bepe Fellini supervised the reconstruction of the parish in the years after the disturbances. While he attracted monies for the various projects in need, he also reinvigorated the spiritual life of the parish and its chapels, promoting lay participation and inculturation. Bepe's slogan for the rebuilding project was 'Boraja is Beautiful', and this was emblazoned on tee-shirts and nylon bags, advertising the parish throughout the country. His success in attracting funds for the parish became well known, and he developed pastoral and development facilities in this former mission station that many dioceses in the country could only aspire to. Local people recall his time in the parish as "the golden time", when, as a local mission boy remembers, "everything was just given freely, we had water, electricity and everything was beautiful" (Charles, tape 5, May 1994)

In 1982, Bepe met an American nurse who was working as a volunteer in a project in Kenya, Rosemary Dubois. She came to work in Boraja Hospital, and a relationship developed between them that local people recall as conducted very publicly. Several local people describe the events leading to the end of their relationship, which occurred when Rosemary left Uganda to

⁹ This priest acted as co-ordinator between the Diocese of Arua and the volunteer agency which sent me to Boraja. He had made the original connection between the diocese and VMM in 1982, and had facilitated the placement of several volunteers in Boraja from 1982 until 1993, although he left the parish in 1991. As such, I was connected to this priest in a more explicit way than the other clergy I discuss, although I rarely communicated with him in a personal capacity.

wait for Bepe to leave his congregation and join her. Bepe however, decided to remain a priest and to remain in Uganda, and Rosemary was bitterly disappointed. Some time later, Bepe entered another relationship with Sarah Orache, a Ugandan sister who worked at the hospital, and although she states clearly that "he never intended to leave the church for me, since I am just an African woman", she was forced to leave her own congregation in 1989 when the relationship became public. There were rumours of other liaisons with local women and missionaries too, and although many of these were merely built on the reputation he acquired after his highly public relationships, it was generally considered by local people that Bepe was "a man who just needed women" (Rosa, fieldnotes August 1993).

During 1993 and 1994, the nature of Bepe's relationship with an American volunteer missionary, Candy Sayer, who worked in the Pastoral Co-ordinators' Office with him came under close scrutiny by co-workers in the diocese. We often heard Candy referred to as Bepe's 'Personal Secretary', and assumed that this was simply a reference to their intense working relationship, which meant that they spent most of their time together. This is, in fact, a lugbara euphemism for 'traditional wife', and was a joke openly directed at Candy. It emerged that there was concern at parish and Diocesan level about the relationship, and among Bepe's Comboni community and general congregation. Bepe had been summoned by his provincial to Kampala in October 1993 and warned to change his behaviour towards Candy, to ensure that he slept at his community house and to generally spend less time with her. Although Bepe had left Boraja parish to work in the diocesan centre in 1991, the parish considered him their concern, and the parish elders instructed the parish priest to relay their disapproval of his relationship with Candy to the bishop and the Provincial, which he did reluctantly. Bepe felt betrayed by Boraja, and visited the place very rarely after 1993, resigning from the Boards of both the Hospital and BDSI in

August 1994. In January 1994, Candy moved from Boraja to Ediofe 'to be nearer to her work'¹⁰.

In Ediofe, Bepe and Candy attracted comment from several quarters, while their private affairs, witnessed by local domestic staff, became the fodder of diocesan gossip¹¹. In February 1994, Candy received an anonymous letter, telling her to leave 'their' priest alone, and to go home. She was very upset about this and left for a retreat in Zaire. A woman working in the Diocese later told me that the letter had been penned by a group of local Diocesan priests, who were just fed up of Candy's 'brazen' behaviour. Later in that month, the committee for the forthcoming Second Diocesan Pastoral Synod met, and reworked the plans and schedules that Bepe and Candy had meticulously mapped out for the Synod. Critics on the committee argued that others needed to be more involved with the process, and one Comboni priest commented "Who is running this Diocese? The bishop or Bepe and Bepino?" (Diary notes, February 1994)

8.3.1.a Discussion: Indispensable charisma

Bepe presents an ambiguous image of missionary activity in West Nile. His commitment to the local people is total, although this is exercised in a paternalistic way. While he is at the forefront of inculturating local liturgies, encouraging lay participation and promoting 'self-help' development projects, he does so from a 'top-down' position. He is the guarantor of large project grants to Boraja and the diocese, and administers such funds with his 'personal cushion' of donations raised in his native Italy. In his 'development' activities, he presents a veneer of accountability to the

¹⁰ We shared the VMM compound with Candy and another volunteer for the first year of our time in Boraja, where she occupied one of two houses alone. This arrangement also came under close local scrutiny, and people openly asked why we shared accommodation with another volunteer, while Candy lived alone. The inference was that this arrangement facilitated the many visits Fr Bepe made to the compound at this time.

agencies which donate funds to his designated projects, and manipulates his administration of the overlapping monies and projects with money which he raise privately in his home parishes (discussed in chapter 6). Therefore, while he may appear 'accountable', the reality of lost materials, overspent budgets, currency deviations and stolen goods does not reach the donors. This degree of paternalistic administration may be well intentioned, but in the long-term, it leads to managerial difficulties among his successors, who have to be accountable to donors without the cushioning effect of private monies.

Also, local people did not take full responsibility (or credit) for the success of the projects and the administration, and when Bepe left the parish, detaching himself from responsibilities there, the sense of loss, disappointment and 'let-down' was acute (see similar accounts in Green 1993, Doornbos 1995 and Taylor 1958). The people of the parish, despite his efforts to 'empower' them, felt inadequate when his steering presence was gone. It is true that initiatives which he championed have succeeded in generating a sense of capability and potential among certain groups (in particular the groups), but he rendered his own position as parish priest as 'unmatchable'. For Ugandan clergy following his tenure in the parish, his was an impossible act to follow.

In Boraja, his period as parish priest is recalled in terms of a 'Golden era', and parishioners not directly involved with the current administration of the parish complain that his successors are mean, complacent and inefficient. Local people often declare how much they loved Bepe, how generous he was, how he spoke their language, how much he did for them and how he loved them (Mzees and Mission 'boys' Tapes). The present parish priest however, speaks of the 'burden' he inherited in 'Beautiful Boraja', where

¹¹ In 1994, when Bepe and Candy went on holiday together, Candy's housegirl found one of her drawers left unlocked, and in this society where love-letters are so significant in courtship and relationships, full sentences and quotations from Bepe's letters to Candy were soon speedily circulating around the Diocese.

parishioners expect unrealistic material services and are unwilling to contribute to maintain the structures he has inherited (as in Doornbos 1995). While not overtly critical of Bepe, it is clear that Bepe's legacy is a problem for this Ugandan priest who is struggling with the financial burden of an expensive maintenance budget, and the collective burden of a parish entrenched in its dependent 'missionary mentality' (Daniel Ojobile, Tape 8, May 1994). In no way is Bepe 'held accountable' for this legacy.

The language used by local people to discuss and explain Bepe's behaviour in the past ten years, tends to reinforce the notion that he was somehow vulnerable to the charms of women and that he merely 'succumbed' to normal behaviour 'for a man'. Several people referred to his relationship with Sarah Orache in terms of her 'bewitching him', which not only casts him in a vulnerable light, but places Sarah in one which is dangerous and manipulative. The women with whom he was known to have had intimate relationships were all in their late 30s or early 40s, and considered by local people drawing on a lugbara cultural discourse to be at an age when they were 'desperate'. The imagined spaces assumed for these women is that although they had successful professional careers, that they were still 'in need' of a man, and still hoping for children. Locally, the reason given for Bepe breaking the relationship with Rosemary Dubois was that he considered himself too old to father children, but that otherwise, he would have left the congregation and married her. In the relationships which became public, his decisions to remain with his congregation were tempered with his concern for the women in the relationships. However, he retained his professional and religious position, whereas they both compromised theirs to some degree. While Rosemary left Boraja, Sarah left the congregation; Bepe left none of the institutions which sustained his position. When Candy received her anonymous letter, she was accused of posing a threat to the vocation of this 'good priest'.

In this way, it is clear that Bepe's imagined space encapsulates both the powerful and the vulnerable capacities of the male missionary construct, but that they are applied in different contexts. When relating to matters of money, material advantage and 'development', Bepe is cast in the powerful, capable, strong position. When discussing his relationships with women and the consequences of his actions, Bepe is cast as vulnerable man who should be protected from temptation, forgiven when errant, and certainly not punished when he has strayed from the chaste path of his chosen vocation. The women in his life are portrayed as self-seeking and manipulative, flawed and dangerous. When he emerged from his relationships with Rosemary and Sarah Orache still within the priesthood, local people commended *Bepe* for his fortitude and sense.

In Catholic terms of accountability, it is the community where each Combonian lives that supports and sustains him in his daily life. The Ediofe community where Bepe was based was comprised of older brothers and priests, who strongly disapproved of Bepe's sexual behaviour. They challenged him many times over small issues, like timekeeping, community responsibilities and having Candy to share lunch with the community every day, but their comments went unheeded (fieldnotes, May 1993). It was only after they tired of 'covering' for his whereabouts that they eventually informed their provincial of their concerns about Bepe.

The relationship between the missionary congregation of which is he a member and the diocese of which he is an employee is constructed in terms of service. While the Comboni Provincial is in a position to deploy his members to positions which suit the congregation, his first obligation is to locate the members to serve the Ugandan church. This means that as long as the bishop wants Bepe to remain in the diocese, the Provincial will deploy him there, despite misgivings he may have about Bepe's conduct. This understanding is sustainable to a certain point, at which Bepe's usefulness to

the diocese is outweighed by the problems he may generate. By 1994, this position had not yet been reached, even though opinion in the diocese argued that Bepe's behaviour was too flagrant an abuse of his vows to be tolerated much longer. When I asked people why Bepe remained despite the mounting criticism, the general opinion was that West Nile was his home now, and that he loved the people there more than anything. Most people believed that his affair with Candy would pass, and that she, like his other women, would eventually suffer a broken heart and leave. People clearly saw that West Nile served Bepe as much as he served it;

"What is he anywhere else? Here he can be boss" (Susan Orache, Tape 11, June 1994).

It was believed that the Provincial had been persuaded by the bishop not to remove Bepe from his position until the Synod of late 1994 at least had been completed. During 1993 and 1994, the bishop accompanied Bepe and Candy on fundraising trips to both Italy and the USA, visiting their home dioceses in addition to his usual 'hunting grounds' in Europe. The bishop, it was claimed, would hold onto Bepe for as long as he could, and a common rhetorical question answered my query about why the bishop turned a 'blind eye' to Candy and Bepe living together on diocesan property:

"Why should he throw away his 'Gold Card'?" (Diary notes October 15th 1993 and fieldnotes February 1994).

In this way, it is clear that Bepe's testing of the boundaries of his imagined space are reaching their limits. The terms of accountability that apply in his Catholic culture have clearly been breached in his relationship with Candy, but the boundaries remain intact (this time, as before) because the 'development' codes of acceptable behaviour are still in force, albeit with the tacit understanding of both the bishop and the Provincial who have the wider interests of the West Nile at heart. Bepe's deployment of his widely recognised charm is within the communal discourses of all the cultural

elements he draws upon - in his 'local' terms, his charm in flamboyantly 'Italian'; in 'development' terms, he is a successful fund raiser and manager, and in 'Catholic' terms he is merely a 'loving' priest - yet all of these identities are underwritten by his particular sexuality, which is active, effective and powerful.

8.3.2 Brother Marco Caprielli : Steady and solid, the builder brother

A contrast to the situation with Fr Bepe Fellini is provided by one of his Comboni colleagues in West Nile, Brother Caprielli Marco. Marco is also in his early 50s, and arrived in West Nile around the same time as Fr Bepe, in the mid 1960s. Marco is a builder, and has built many of the impressive Comboni missions and churches throughout the Diocese. He takes great pride in his work, and imports Italian materials and works with reliable local sources. He has created many of the buildings that are so reminiscent of Italy, and for the interiors of the churches, has mimicked marbling, granite slab flooring and painted frescos on the walls.

For many years, Marco has been attended in his house and accompanied on his trips throughout the diocese by 'his Martha' as she is known. Martha is a local woman, widowed for some time, who is Marco's 'personal secretary'. Several years ago, their relationship came to the attention of the Provincial in Kampala, and investigations were made into Marco's conduct. He was reprimanded at the time, and warned that his behaviour was inappropriate, although Martha remained his housekeeper and continues to be his regular companion in his distinctive pick-up van. However, despite the reprimand, people speak of Marco, and his relationship with Martha fondly. Marco has never intimated that he would leave his congregation to marry her, and their monogamous relationship has lasted for many years now. There is little censure of their behaviour, and it is not treated with the same sense of scandal, disappointment and bitterness that people speak of Bepe's relationships.

8.3.2.a Discussion : Unremarkable sin

How has this tolerance evolved around this relationship, and not around Bepe's? Is Marco's imagined space so different from Bepe's? I believe the reason for the difference lies in the construction of the imagined spaces that these men and these women occupy, but also in the differences between Marco's and Bepe's expressed sexuality.

Marco's imagined space is that of a Brother, and not a priest, and in Catholic terms his 'ranking' is somehow 'less holy' than that of a priest. Although he too has taken a vow of celibacy, his infringement of the assumed vow of chastity is considered less serious because he is not a priest, and therefore not consecrating bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Since he sits nearer to lay people in the hierarchy of 'holiness' in the church, their expectations of him are more similar to those they share themselves. As local people said "Why should a builder not have a wife ?"(fieldnotes, June 1994). In this way, Marco's imagined space was understood in local terms as markedly different from a priest's. Marco does not have access to the project monies which missionary priests do. He is firmly cast in the role of 'practical Brother', an implementer rather than a leader, and assumes neither administrative nor spiritual responsibility in his community nor congregation. His work, designing, managing and constructing buildings throughout the diocese, while engaged in the training of local men in these skills, is funded through monies that other people secure. In 'development' terms Marco is much less powerful than Bepe. Marco never commands large grant monies, and Martha does not benefit from such projects. The material assistance he affords her and her family is from his personal stipend and his personal financial resources. Therefore Marco has very limited terms of financial accountability to fulfil, and his Catholic terms, based on his religious position as a Brother deliver him from the same degree of moral expectations exercised of priests.

The second reason that local people were not anxious about Marco's companion was that Martha was a mature woman, and she was unlikely to bear any children that would call attention to the relationship. Also, and more importantly, Martha came 'from the village' - she was not an educated, modern woman, ;

"They were not worried because Martha is just a simple village woman, she is from the village in fact." (Diary notes, June 1994)

The implication behind this is that Martha was of lower status than a young fertile woman, or a teacher or Sister. This lugbara discourse thus reflects elements of early missionary European thinking on the 'value' of women who are black and 'uneducated', which have now been absorbed into their own perspectives on themselves, especially in relation to issues of sexuality with European clergy. So, the construction of Martha's imagined space as neither 'precious' nor 'productive' eased the tensions that might otherwise have surrounded her relationship with Marco. Marco's relationship with Martha released her family from the burden of providing for her and her children. Had Marco chosen a younger woman, with 'more potential' and value as a wife and mother than Martha, her family may have had to view the situation more pragmatically¹².

Finally, Marco's personality is characterised by his unassuming, humble, genial demeanour. Although very likeable, he is not overtly 'charming', and is not a man who 'attracts', as Bepe is. The expression of their sexualities albeit both male missionaries, is markedly different, and this is represented in their imagined spaces. Marco's contest of his space has been muted and

¹² In practice, when a foreign priest formed a particular attachment to a local person, then he would 'take care' of the person and their extended family. In effect, this generosity is sometimes worth more, in material terms, than a brideprice, and the family of a girl who is the particular friend of a priest, may calculate that the favour of the priest is worth more than creating a fuss, providing that the girl is content.

undramatic - he remains within the terms of accountability of his space, since these are set at a different level to Bepe's.

8.4 Lugbara Diocesan Priests

In 1994, Ugandan priests outnumbered missionary priests by 65 to 26 in the diocese. Local priests occupy an imagined space which is neither that of their local Catholic lay brothers and sisters, nor that of their religious missionary brethren. Theirs is an 'in-between' space, which in this current climate of inculturation and 'Africanisation' is becoming more nuanced and complex than when it was originally constructed.

The lifestyle of local priests is different to missionary priests in several respects. As diocesan priests, they are not members of a religious congregation, and do not live in community houses which afford material and spiritual support to members. Living in small parish houses attached to parish churches throughout the diocese, few priests have access to their own vehicles, and rely on motorbikes or the generosity of neighbouring mission parishes for transport into Arua or around the diocese.¹³ Located in parishes within the diocese, local priests are often surrounded by family and clan members, and spend much more time 'in the village' for pastoral and social reasons than missionary priests do. Although they do not have access to the European funds of their missionary colleagues, local priests are wealthy compared to their lugbara peers, who may be employed as teachers or nurses in the hospital, and they benefit from occasional trips overseas and other 'fringe benefits' of working in a diocese which retains strong missionary links with Europe.

Local people 'nurture' lugbara priests in the village and community, and operate different expectations of local priests than they do of missionary clergy. Families will devote precious school fees towards a son who

indicates that he may have a vocation to the priesthood, and encourage his vocation and education at the expense of his siblings, until the diocese assumes responsibility for both, and the boy is enrolled in the junior seminary at Pokea. If he completes his education at the junior seminary, he will attend one of the major seminaries in the south (at the expense of the diocese and central church funds), completing a degree in theology before being ordained a priest. Many local priests expand their formal education overseas, and study in the USA, Germany, Spain or Italy before returning to Arua Diocese, where the massive investment in their training and education is expected to pay dividends for the local church. Local priests in the parishes of the diocese are therefore men who have been feted by their families and the diocese for many years. Among the most 'educated' men in the region, they occupy an 'in-between' space between the village and the mission houses, and are assured of their essential place in future of the local church. As long as the Catholic Church retains the consecrated Eucharist as the central tenet of liturgical worship, and as long as only celibate ordained priests can consecrate the Eucharist, these local men are fundamental to the survival of the faith in this region. The security of this position, and an awareness of their importance has had an impact on the behaviour of local priests, who often test the boundaries of their imagined spaces and the expected parameters of 'priestly behaviour'.

In arguing that missionaries still have a role in West Nile, and that they still set a good example of Christianity, one of the oldest Christians in Boraja commented :

"Many of the ordained native priests have not lived to the expectations of the Christians, contrary to the early missionaries. This kind of act is very reproachable from the other denominations - the behaviour of native priests." (Mzees, tape 15, June 1994).

This illustrates how sensitive local Catholics are to the criticism of their clergy by Protestants in the region, and that different levels of expectation

¹³Boraja parish retained the vehicle which Fr Bepe once used in the parish.

operate between missionary and local, and Catholic and Protestant clergy.

Cici, a 'mission boy' at Boraja, makes a similar point :

"These Diocesan priests, their behaviour is up to now lacking...they move at night and even they stay outside. The missionaries that are here, they do not drink in the open place or do not go from home to home. The Diocesan priests they can drink anywhere they like." (Mission boys tape 10, June 1994).

These statements refer to the common knowledge that certain local priests engage in sexual relationships with local women in the diocese, and that they socialise in a way that missionary clergy never did¹⁴. In drinking in the villages, and 'moving at night', these local priests are behaving like young men looking for wives, and yet in their professional and religious capacity, these men regularly criticise local people for this very type of behaviour (Christian 1989, Green 1993). Put simply, local people, who feel that they have 'invested' in these local priests, expect 'better' of these men who hold no mystery for them. Unlike missionary priests, local people have intimate knowledge of the families and circumstances of these local priests, and the shroud of missionary 'respect' which still attends local discourse on missionary priests' behaviour is absent for local priests.

Early in 1993, the Diocesan newsletter, the 'West Nile Panorama' printed a leader article, written by one of the senior clerics in the diocese, advising the priests and religious of the Diocese to be more scrupulous about their social habits, warning them not to 'move out at night' or to sleep in places other than Priests' houses, missions and community houses¹⁵. This was in the wake of several scandals relating to local priests 'impregnating girls'. In July 1994, several ordinations of local priests were postponed indefinitely because of the candidates' 'inappropriate behaviour'. This decision stunned the Christians of the diocese, many of whom had put many months' work

¹⁴ Between May 31st and June 3rd 1994, the 'Monitor' newspaper (Kampala) published an exchange of articles and letters on the apparent difficulty in appointing a new Auxiliary bishop to Gulu diocese, due to the generally held view that celibacy/chastity was not practised among northern priests.

into preparing the elaborate feasts and celebrations for these sons of their parishes. Apparently the bishop had decided to act upon reports of bad behaviour by his candidates *before* their ordination, rather than ordaining them, and dealing with their problems as priests. "If this disgrace does not shock them into realising they are not young men looking for brides, nothing will" commented a local catechist, one of several who expressed satisfaction to see the 'ego-trip' of young deacons and priests deflated.

The following section concentrates on the imagined space of two local diocesan priests who lived in Boraja in 1993 and 1994, in the context of their relationships with local women in the mission place.

8.4.1 Fr Antony Obelele : Charming and careless, the potent priest

Fr Antony was the curate of Boraja Parish during 1993 and 1994, helping Fr Daniel Ojobile administer to the parish and its forty-four chapels¹⁶. During six months of 1994, he was associated with three pregnancies in the mission place¹⁷.

In March of 1994, Palma Ajio, a girl of 18 or 19 and one of the cooks at a parish pastoral centre was admitted to Boraja Hospital, bleeding. The doctors diagnosed that she'd had an 'illegal' abortion, and that she might not recover. In the hospital, her father and family pressed her to identify the father of the child, the person who had paid for the abortion. Convinced that she would surely die otherwise, Palma Ajio said that Fr Antony had impregnated her and that he had paid for the botched operation, carried out

¹⁵ Unfortunately I was unable to acquire a copy of this edition of the newsletter.

¹⁶ Fr Ojobile was a quiet, studious, gentle man, often described as 'holy' and 'truly devout'. His reputation was untainted by any suggestion of compromised vows.

¹⁷ All of the information in this section is drawn from diary notes and fieldnotes from March to August 1994.

in a disreputable private clinic in Arua¹⁸. This news spread around the parish like wildfire, and every time the parish vehicle left the gates, people strained to see if it was Fr Daniel, escorting Fr Antony to see the bishop. This did not happen, and people began to complain of Daniel's weakness. Fr Antony was overheard in a local drinking place the following night accusing another man, a father of six, pillar of the community and the director of the institution where Palma worked, of also sleeping with Palma. This rumour also spread quickly.

Fr Daniel's response to the accusations was to dispatch Fr Antony to work in the most remote of the parish chapels, and Fr Antony did not say mass in Boraja for many weeks. When he did return, there was an air of anticipation when he took the microphone to preach to the packed chapel. He began by relating a story of a local goat which has been stolen, and how the wrong person is accused of stealing it, a thinly veiled reference to protest his innocence in the matter of Palma. People in the congregation laughed aloud as he continued his sermon about the dangers of believing rumours and untruths, but Fr Antony was laughing too.

During these weeks, people were awaiting the arrival of the rains to mark the end of the dry season. Many people had planted their crops already and if the rains were late, they would lose their bean crops completely. As the hot days pass by, local people talked continually of the unseasonable delay in the rains. One day, I heard local women talking about both Antony and the rains, and they explained to me that he was being blamed for the delay in the rain. Antony's family was from that part of Boraja county, near Bora,

¹⁸ In the eyes of the Church and of custodians of lugbara cultural values, the more serious offence that has been committed in this situation is the procurement of an abortion for the young girl. Whereas to have sexual relations with a woman who is not your wife is considered sinful, it is not as 'mortal' a sin as to have a part in an abortion, which, if proven, can carry a penalty of excommunication from the church. In lugbara terms, compensation must be paid for both the injury to the girls' reputation and for the loss of a child of the clan. The charge of procuring an abortion is therefore taken very seriously, and so irrefutable evidence would be required to prove responsibility for such an action.

where the reliability of the rains was considered by many to be rooted. A local medicine man who practised there had been attracting a lot of business as the rains were delayed, and recently had placed the blame for the delay on "that son of this place, who is behaving badly there in that place".

Antony's sermon the following week was a timely repeat of the regular sermon theme of the paganism of local medicines, and how all things are in the hands of God the Father, and in no other forces at all.

The following month, May 1994, brought another accusation to the door of the mission. Behind the PLC, the parish had some very basic accommodation and little parcels of land which were allocated to widows of the parish without family to support them. The daughter of one of the widows, a teenage girl called Margaret Aseru, cleaned the church every day, and was discovered to be in an advanced state of pregnancy. She identified Fr Antony as the father. Antony again took a low profile, and appeared only rarely around the mission for a few weeks. The girl had no father or uncles to argue her case or enter negotiations with the diocese.

Early in the month of June, Margaret Aseru, delivered her baby at the Widows' Quarters. In traditional lugbara culture (Asindu, 1993), there are certain traditional birthing rites which accompany the birth of a child (see Chapter 5). One of these, called 'Adro guu', involves the women of the new mother's family bringing traditional food and drink to the place of the new father's uncles, where the clan may gather to eat and mark the arrival of the new clan member. One morning, we noticed a group of women crossing our compound with various dishes and utensils, deliberately choosing an awkward route through our compound as they moved from the Widows' Quarters to the Fathers' Quarters. We duly asked what was happening, and were told with giggles that the family of the new baby was going with the traditional food to celebrate the birth with the 'uncles' of the baby - the priests of the parish. By the time they reached the Fathers' Quarters, there

were many spectators and much public laughter at the event. They did not receive a warm welcome, but returned home having made their point.

Scarcely another week had passed before the last of Antony's alleged 'misbehaviours' came to public notice. A girl in S.2. at Boraja Secondary School called Onzimarua Clementina was discovered pregnant, and had claimed that Fr Antony was the father of the baby. What marked this case from the other girls was that Clementina was the younger sister of another Diocesan priest. Fr Paskwale Candia had been a classmate of Antony's and came from a very respectable and pious family in Ambekua in Boraja parish, and was held in particularly high esteem by local people. He had been stationed in Pakelle, the parish of the refugee camps in the north east, and a few months earlier the parish had been abducted by Sudanese guerrillas. He was taken by the guerrillas and forced to walk for thirteen days to one of their camps near Gulu. From there he had escaped and had been found, starved and near death. He had only recently returned to Boraja hospital to recuperate, and was still very disturbed by the incident. There was deep public sympathy for the priest and his family. He was considered a local hero.

That Antony should have 'impregnated' the sister of this local hero was both bad judgement and bad luck. The fact that Clementina was at secondary school meant that she was a bright girl, and that she may have had a future as a teacher or a nurse, given her brother's connections and assistance. So, not only did Antony ruin the prospects of a 'good' girl, but he brought embarrassment and anxiety to her respectable family at a time when they were already troubled. Clementina's family, which included parish elders and catechists, came to the Fathers' Quarters and camped on the grass outside, attracting much publicity to their case. This represented the traditional rites of negotiation over brideprice, and was publicly humiliating for Antony and the other priests. The male relatives returned several times over a few days, and eventually Antony agreed to speak with them. The

matter was referred to the Bishop, who in cases like this acted as the representative of the accused priest, and usually negotiated some compensatory settlement in cash and in livestock. Antony undertook the negotiations with the family of Aseru Margaret himself, and none took place with Palma Ajio's family.

8.4.1.a Discussion : Vulnerability lost

How do these events reflect the contested nature of Fr Antony's imagined space, and at what points, in which terms and to whom is he made accountable? The most significant cultural elements of Antony's space in relation to these events are those which are religious and 'Catholic', and those which are local and 'lugbara'. The 'development' cultural elements are not foregrounded in these circumstances and therefore the matter of material, financial accountability is not prominent in this analysis. There is a sense of 'cumulative outrage' within the communal discourse of either 'Catholic' or 'lugbara' dimensions, that builds with the reporting of each pregnancy in this narrative. Antony's testing of the boundaries of his imagined space becomes more strained as the weeks pass by and as revelations continue. As the situation a few months earlier, when the bishop postponed the ordination of several local young priests also revealed, local clergy can no longer assume that their status as priests will excuse their behaviour when they choose to behave like young lugbara men. There was a sense in the diocese, and certainly in Boraja during the weeks in which the accusations against Antony came fast and hard, that a time for reinforcing the boundaries had come for local priests. The imagined spaces that they occupied, where they were constructed as vulnerable men struggling to remain celibate, were judged only partially representative of the sexual lives they were leading. In Antony's case, each pregnancy illustrates how his negotiation of his imagined space was in part dependent on the imagined space occupied by the woman involved. With Palma Ajio, local communal

discourse constructed her space as that of a 'village girl', and Antony's as a 'diocesan priest' :

"You know, poor Palma was too stupid to play clever words like Antony. She is just a village girl, who cannot think like he can to escape stories and accusations" (Diary notes, August 1994).

The balance between her testimony and his (which actually admitted a degree of guilt) was uneven because he spoke from his holy and vulnerable space, while casting her as the Eve-like predator. In lugbara and Catholic terms, his was the more powerful voice, and since there was no longer any pregnancy to 'prove' either testimony, local people and local clergy allowed the matter to drop from discourse, while Antony's imagined space remained intact.

In the case of Aseru Margaret, a child was born, which invited certain traditional rites and customs into the public domain. Antony did not discredit the reputation of Margaret, who was after all a 'mission girl' who was known to lead a sheltered life with her mother. Rather, Antony used Margaret's isolated place in the community, bereft of male support, and her docile will to believe in her own sinfulness and in the goodness of the clergy to eschew his paternal responsibilities for her child. In this way his 'public' disgrace was contained within the boundaries which defined her imagined space as a widow's daughter, not those within which he enjoyed such opportunity and freedom. Antony's transgression of the catholic terms of accountability of his imagined space as a priest were accommodated within his partial reparation in 'lugbara' terms to Aseru Margaret and her mother.

The third case presents a different scenario, and was locally coined "the straw that broke the camel's back". Due to the fact that she was an educated girl from a respectable family and with a promising future, Antony would have had a difficult time extracting himself from some degree of

responsibility for her situation anyway. That she was the sister of another priest, and one held in higher esteem than Antony, cast her in an elevated position to the other women he was accused of seducing. This matter would have come to the public attention of the bishop, even if it had not been the third such matter within a few months, since the social status of Clementina and her family demanded recompense. It is important to consider that these two stories and these two women were still in the communal discourse when the story of Clementina broke. Retrospectively, their situations were taken as collaborative evidence that Antony must surely be guilty of this latest accusation.

With Clementina's space defined in terms of respectability and potential, Antony's could not automatically out-weigh hers in either 'Catholic' or 'lugbara' discourse. With the accusation of impregnating Clementina came the most vigorous testing of Antony's imagined space as in any way 'vulnerable'. In Catholic terms of accountability, he had transgressed the boundaries of acceptable behaviour which had very publicly damaging consequences. He had also infringed internal moral codes of moral behaviour expected to prevail between 'good' 'top table' Catholic families. These boundary clashes were compounded by infringements in lugbara terms of accountability, where he was denying responsibility and therefore payment of traditional compensation (a cow) for the pregnancy. Also, the cultural practices of negotiations between clans and family members were denied to Clementina, since Antony's 'family' was the diocese¹⁹.

Therefore, Antony had breached his imagined space, and in doing so, had related in markedly different ways to the imagined spaces of the women in the narrative. In particular, his space became untenable when his 'vulnerability' was held to public ridicule. Clementina became the innocent

and helpless victim of 'Antony the seducer', and her imagined space was entirely a vulnerable one. Local discourse extended the personal vulnerability of Clementina's imagined space to her entire family, augmenting the accusation of despoiling Clementina at the very time when the family was at its most vulnerable too.

When I left Boraja, it was widely expected that Antony would be "held accountable" for the misery he had caused Clementina and her family. The story and accusation were an integral part of the mission communal discourse for several months, and there was a public air of anticipation as the diocese awaited the return of the bishop from overseas. Clementina's reputation grew as time passed ; she was cast ever more innocent, virginal, pious and diligent, while Antony was publicly disgraced in both local and religious terms.

8.4.2 Fr Jude Imbidro : Diocesan treasure, the impossible priest

In this case study, I address the issue of how, once held to account within the boundaries of an imagined space, a priest is expected to respond, and how are these responses accommodated? Does the threat of censure, punishment, disgrace or expulsion from the space bring about a response, a change in behaviour, a 'result'? If the terms of accountability (of any of the cultural elements) are to *effectively* define and enforce the boundaries of imagined spaces, then the various responses they engender should also be analysed. Previous case studies in this thesis have illustrated how people have responded to their boundaries, by retreating to normative behaviour (Sister Matron), or by adapting new spaces (Sarah Orache), but the case of Fr Jude Imbidro demonstrates that some peoples' imagined spaces are defined in terms which fail to exercise accountability in cultural or social

¹⁹ Priests in Africa, such as Antony, cannot draw on material family support in times such as this, and it is the diocese as his employer, and the bishop as his spiritual 'shepherd' who must steer priests through these complex situations which interweave local culture and institutional taboos.

terms. In such cases, new terms are constructed, which may indeed be 'mortal'.

There was a diocesan priest staying at the Fathers' quarters who was living in Boraja, receiving regular treatment at the hospital. Fr Jude Imbidro was in his early thirties, an erudite, intelligent and educated lugbara priest, who had at one stage been considered destined for 'high places' in the Ugandan church; a diocesan 'treasure'²⁰. Fr Jude was suffering from full-blown AIDS and during 1993 and 1994, twice came near death. While the recorded rate of AIDS and HIV in West Nile is lower than other regions of the country, it is nonetheless an illness which affects many aspects of life for young lugbara people. That Fr Jude's condition should be so public is quite unusual in the diocese; in the past other priests have died from AIDS related illnesses, but often without formal diagnosis and quite suddenly. Although he was living at the Fathers' Quarters, and most of the time was well, he did not carry out any parish duties, since he had been 'suspended' from the Catholic priesthood and from celebrating the sacraments in 1991. The bishop apparently took this decision after a catalogue of incidents involving Jude and several local women. At one stage Jude had been living with a woman who became ill. He tried to secure traditional medicinal treatment for her, and paid one cow from parish funds to a local 'witchdoctor'. When he was suspended, he lived with the woman until she died, of an AIDS related illness. By this time, everyone in the Diocese knew that Jude would be infected with the virus, and as he became ill, he had no family to support him. The bishop then offered him a home in the parish at Boraja and free treatment in Boraja Hospital.

This was offered on the understanding that Jude would 'behave himself', and since the parish priest was the widely respected and devout Fr Daniel

²⁰ For our first six months in Boraja, he gave us lessons in the local language.

Ojobile, the bishop hoped that Jude would reform under his influence. During 1993, Jude was very friendly with the young medical superintendent of the hospital, and they would take the hospital vehicle into Arua often to spend the night there, behaviour which aroused concern in both the hospital and the Fathers' Quarters. When this man left, Jude spent more time with Fr Antony, and the two socialised extensively in the villages around the mission at night, despite the efforts of Fr Daniel to curtail their movements "How can I ?" he complained, "I am not their father, they are not my little children. Can I chase them there, or lock the gates?" (Diary notes, March 1994).

One night in November 1993, there was a commotion towards Boraja Headquarters. The father of a Primary Three girl (aged 13 or 14) had found Jude, alone with his young daughter late at night, and with his brothers and sons had charged through the compound to catch Jude, who ran away. The men soon became a mob, and on their way towards the mission, stopped off at the house of the Headmaster of the Primary school, Mr. Titus Ogavu. Titus was involved because the girl was still at his school, and so he numbered collectively among the men responsible for her safety until she married. He was also a respected figure, to head the march on the Fathers' Quarters at 2am. Together these men, charged with various degrees of responsibility and authority, arrived at the parish gate. Jude had taken refuge in his own rooms, and Fr Daniel was woken by the men shouting outside the gate. Fr Daniel calmed the men and assured them that he would take care of Jude and report the incident to the bishop. As it would be now widely known that this young girl had been seduced by Jude, her reputation would be marked forever. People would always suspect that she carried 'the virus', and it would be difficult to find a husband for her, let alone attract any substantial brideprice. In a very real sense, she was 'ruined'.

Shortly after this Jude became ill himself and suffered another attack of pneumonia. This was his third pneumonia, and local medical lore expected it to kill him, but he rallied round slowly. People began to explain his behaviour that night in November in terms of when "the virus infected his brain". During 1994, he distanced himself from Fr Antony again, and became interested in writing project proposals for Sudanese clergy. He projected himself as a 'reformed character', and it is true that he no longer drank locally, or 'moved out at night', by the time we left in September 1994. He continued to petition the bishop for his reinstatement to the full priesthood.

8.4.2.a Discussion : Vulnerability reconstructed

Jude's imagined space as a lugbara priest was 'disciplined' in Catholic terms by his suspension from the priesthood, an instance where the ultimate sanction of these terms had been applied. In lugbara culture, he had been publicly disgraced by a mob of men who had chased him through the night - his 'lugbara' boundaries had been transgressed and this penalty delivered. Yet neither sanction effected the desired change in his behaviour. His imagined space was fragmented by these sanctions and penalties, but he clung to his 'priest' identity nonetheless.

People believed that the bishop felt responsible for this young man whom the diocese had nurtured, educated and ordained, and although Jude had disappointed his diocesan 'family', and although he had been disgraced 'in the eyes of the church', the bishop would never see him destitute. Also, the bishop was aware that Jude carried the HIV virus, and believed that as long as he was in Boraja, under the watchful eye of Fr Daniel, he would have to account for his activities. The bishop's benevolence towards Jude was therefore also a measure of control over a dangerous virus which had 'polluted' the ranks of the clergy. As a diocesan priest, Fr Jude was accountable to his bishop, but in effect, the condition which curtailed his

behaviour was an illness, not his suspension. So while Jude engaged in sexually reckless behaviour, the ultimate disciplinary threat which the bishop could pose was ineffectual in changing this behaviour.

As the events above illustrate, even the public knowledge of this illness, and the fact that he was living in the Fathers' Quarters was not enough 'threat' to force Jude to desist from sexual relations with women. The issue of accountability in this case is therefore complicated by Jude's lack of response to it. When faced with the ultimate sanction that the diocese and mortality could confront him with, Jude's behaviour remained unchanged. In most representational terms, Jude had little left to lose.

So what imagined space did Jude now occupy, as a dying ex-priest living in a mission, both shunned and tolerated by local people and diocesan colleagues alike? A consideration of how the construction of 'vulnerability' in his case illustrates how his 'new' imagined space has evolved.

This new space was one where he was *reconstructed* as 'vulnerable', by virtue of the disease he carried. People felt sympathy for Jude because he was being visibly ravaged by AIDS illnesses ; he was vulnerable to every infection that lingered in the mission place, and was a pathetic gaunt figure with facial sores and a rasping cough. He *appeared* vulnerable, and so the imagined space he occupied was one of vulnerability.

An extension of this sympathy, engendered in connection with the tacit respect he still earned as an educated an intellectual son of the diocese, is that the virus was believed to "affect his brain" and make him "vulnerable" to misbehaviour²¹. In this complex way, Jude's grossly irresponsible

²¹ At least the imagined space which the young girl occupied was not constructed as posing a risk to Jude's vulnerability. In this case, the massed response of the men who are socially and culturally appointed as her 'guardians' is testimony to the construction of her imagined space as being innocent and vulnerable. She was blameless in this situation, and this was recognised by the entire community.

behaviour, in seducing ever younger girls to satisfy his sexual appetite and his faltering ego, was 'explained away' by the fact that he was ill. Somehow, within the reconstructed imagined space of vulnerability which was created for Jude, there was allowance for the continuation of his inappropriate behaviour, even though it was known that this behaviour is literally deadly. Jude's 'vulnerability' remained intact despite his catalogue of religious and cultural misbehaviour, in a way which was markedly different to the traditional and now contested imagined vulnerability of other male clergy.

I believe the case of Jude illustrate forcibly how new imagined spaces evolve, and how characteristics of one (like vulnerability) may be transformed in another. The boundaries of his new space are defined by terms of accountability that he has responded to - his new space is defined by his disease, and although he may behave inappropriately as a carrier of the HIV virus, the disease itself conditions his everyday behaviour (wherein he seeks and follows medical advice). Elements of his 'Catholic' and 'lugbara' cultural dimensions are retained in his new space, but they are secondary to the principal defining code of accountability that Jude now attends to. The imagined space which Jude currently occupies is one in which he has been reconstructed as vulnerable in a mortal way ; he is dying.

8.5 Conclusion

The power and influence of the church, and of ordained men within the church has facilitated the construction of 'vulnerability' in a variety of ways. The concentration of vocation with education and privilege has created an imagined space for male clergy in which these elements are highly valued. The male clergy of Arua Diocese are therefore 'set apart' in many ways. However, the analysis of their imagined spaces reveals that they share cultural values with 'ordinary' men in ways that their 'Catholic' terms of accountability render illicit. In this chapter it becomes most evident yet how imagined spaces have 'public' and 'private' dimensions, defined by

communal discourse and individual agency respectively. The layers of coded meanings, unspoken understandings and silent common knowledges that mark what happens between the male clergy and certain women of the diocese would make the straightforward construction of the 'identity' of priests very difficult. My analysis has also illustrated that these events, meanings and knowledges impact upon the 'development' of the place too, as the power exercised by male clergy is transformed and relocated across the cultural terms of accountability of the spaces they inhabit. The connections between project funding, sexual indiscretions, pregnancy compensation and development accounting are made clear when the imagined spaces of the male clergy, who are pivotal brokers of power in this place, are deconstructed.

In opposition to this, women have been constructed as posing a risk to the priests' chastity, and it is through looking at certain men, that the impact of their (contested) vulnerable space upon women can be gauged. That there are more women than men involved in the narratives above indicates how many more women have to share the constructions and emotions of guilt, sin, blame and disgrace that often accompany these illicit relationships. The lives of the men in these narratives remain largely intact (even Jude has outlived his partners), while those of the women do not.

Issues of how the accountability enshrined in the defining boundaries of imagined spaces is effective have emerged in this chapter - and the ways in which men's accountability can be manipulated in relation to a woman's social space, and the way in which some terms of accountability are simply ineffective, are illustrated and discussed. What becomes clear in this chapter is that priests' sexuality is not negated by their public claim to celibacy and that their (often muted and subversive) sexual expression impacts upon every cultural dimension of their imagined space, and also upon the imagined spaces of the women they 'know'

Chapter Nine : Conclusions

9.1 Shades

In retrospect, it would have been a lot easier if I'd worn sunglasses. To have screened the glare of the West Nile sun would have saved me a lot of effort and not a few wrinkles. In metaphorical terms, I would have seen Boraja as it suited me, 'toned down' to an easy, tolerable level. The viewing would have been shaded and protective of my western sensitivities. However, in my time there, I squinted and peered, and learned to sit down with friends in the shade. In the ethnographic based analysis I have presented in this thesis, evidence of my squinting and peering, and occasionally of my sitting in the shade can be found.

This concluding chapter aims to respond to my own research questions and to assess how effective my efforts have been in addressing the 'gaps' and 'neglect' I identified in my early chapters. Acknowledging that 'imagined spaces' is my own interpretative technique, I need to critically examine how I feel it has 'worked', and also, how it has not. In this light, I also discuss the implications and possibilities for future research that this thesis raises.

In this thesis I have argued that the mission place has been rather simplistically represented in academic discourse. The reluctance to consider 'religion' as a major cultural element in 'modern' 'development' settings, despite the arguments of African scholars such as Sanneh (1991, 1993), has resulted in a lack of awareness of the dynamic, complex, creative and powerful characteristics of these mission places which remain pivotal in independent sub-Saharan Africa. My analysis of the modern mission place can be understood within the postcolonial strategy, described by Loomba (1993) to 'dismantle' versions of the *contemporary effects* of the colonial project which stubbornly retain the colonial imprint.

Considerations of mission places that do exist understate the significance of these places, and how these impinge directly upon development initiatives centered there. Particularly within a Catholic religious discourse, the celibacy of female and male

religious is significant, both in terms of how it may interact with local cultural expressions of sexuality, and in how the many layers of meaning and power which attend its contest create discord and ambiguity.

To summarise my key findings : In the mission place at Boraja I observed lives that were framed by codes and identities rooted in 'lugbara', 'Catholic' and 'development' discourses. I learned that understandings and expressions of sexuality underlay these discourses in explicit *and* nuanced ways, and that the exercise of power and authority in the mission place was intimately bound up with these. Notions of 'progress', 'development', 'education' and 'wellbeing' are constructed from the cultural discourses present in the mission, and are materially manifest in the management of mission institutions which attract international funding. At various scales of project management, from large construction projects to weekly accounts at the school, men and women of the mission exercise this power and authority, and also 'accountability'. I argue that this management is entwined with the other dimensions of their mission lives which operate within different terms of accountability, and that for certain Catholic celibate religious, the struggle with their sexuality affects the management of their development projects. I have illustrated this through the stories and narratives of my ethnographic research, which details the circumstances surrounding these concluding statements in ways that hope to make them 'understandable'.

9.2 Imagined spaces examined

In this thesis I have developed and employed an analytical concept which I have called 'imagined spaces'¹. In analysing the imagined spaces of the mission place, I establish a variety of cultural contributors, and give much needed emphasis to the 'religious setting' which has been neglected in research on women in development. My technique is exploratory in several key ways.

Firstly, I have applied this concept, which draws on elements of others' analyses at a level which is both individual and communal. In this way I depart significantly from

¹ In retrospect, since my use of this concept is markedly different from previous analyses using the

both Anderson's (1991) and Radcliffe's (1996,1996a) "imagined" domains, although I hope to retain the essence of the endeavour which Radcliffe describes as the "creative reorganization of place and identity ... as the 'new' world order and globalization help refashion identities" (1996a:23). By allocating an imagined space to each person in a defined communal setting, I have defined the spaces as inherently bounded by communal discourse, although being occupied by individuals exercising personal agency. So while Nagar (1995), Somers (1992) and Johnson *et al* (1994) concentrate upon the complexities of social boundaries and group identities, I have structured the concept of 'Imagined Spaces' to span the individual and group experience. In this way, I hoped to accommodate the complex variety of events, decisions, choices and outcomes that represented individual lives within intensely *social* cultural boundaries. Imagined spaces therefore accommodate the conflict, consent or contradiction between the individual and social norms in a way that 'grouped' social spaces or identities cannot. Imagined spaces however, do have their limits, which I return to below.

Secondly, with regard to 'culture', I adopted a broad understanding of the 'cultural elements' which informed the imagined spaces of people in mission places, and identified three main 'cultural' contributors in this light (although I stress that each imagined space has its own blend of cultural contributions). Therefore, I accommodate the way in which 'local' (lugbara, Italian or ethnic distinction), 'religious' (Catholic) and 'development' cultural discourses are expressed in imagined spaces. This echoes Radcliffe's (1996) work on the gendered discourses of Ecuador, but at a more local, intimate and ethnographic level of analysis. My analysis, like Radcliffe's (1996) and McClintock's (1993) reveals how the discourses that surround certain representations of women in mission are 'powerful forces' in the religious and secular agendas that frame and shape Boraja.

Thirdly, I also establish how codes of practice and the boundaries of social spaces shift over time as the cultures informing the boundaries of accountability evolve and as individuals test these boundaries. Imagined spaces are bounded by terms of

term, perhaps I should have coined a new and different name.

accountability which arise from the cultural elements that inform the space. When tested by an individual's actions within their space, the boundaries are stretched – and they either hold (retaining the person), or they are breached (releasing the person to another space). One set of cultural terms of accountability may allow an individual's action within that space, while another may not.

In this conceptual strategy I have placed Heritage's (1984) theory of accountability in an entirely different setting to his, even quite removed from that adapted by West and Fenstermaker (1995). I have integrated their theory of accountability into the broader concept of 'Imagined Spaces' and then drawn on the particular terms that effect accountability in Boraja. Therefore what may be permissible in 'lugbara' terms, may be unacceptable in 'Catholic' or 'development' terms, and when this happens, it is the more dominant element of the imagined space which carries authenticity. Sarah Orache's imagined space accommodated her relationship with a priest in 'local' terms, but forbade it in her 'Catholic' terms; she had to leave her community and adopt a new space; Sister Matron's relationship with a married man was tolerable in 'lugbara' terms, but unacceptable in 'Catholic' terms, and also, because of its implications for the hospital, unacceptable in 'development' terms. However, since the 'Catholic' element of *his* imagined space was not as dominant as the priest's, some allowance was given, and some stretch was allowed to Sister Matron's infringement of her imagined space in Boraja, and she was merely relocated to the same imagined space in another place.

This is associated to another way in which my use of 'imagined spaces' is innovative, in the demarcation of the boundaries and establishment of new spaces. This establishes the religious setting as an evolving and 'modern' one; in contrast to previous analyses which have focused on past events. AIDS is a 'modern' phenomenon in Uganda, and the space that Fr Jude now occupies is 'new'. It is defined by a 'new' cultural element, a disease which is deadly and sexually transmitted. In another context, Nici Nelson (1995) has analysed the way in which AIDS has informed the actions and perspectives of female sex workers of Nairobi, and so it is clear that there is an emerging discourse on how others inhabit new AIDS

spaces too. However, the AIDS space of the male religious is necessarily different since the imagined space he occupies is one stripped of clan accountability and support. The diocesan and congregational networks which replace clan in the imagined spaces of diocesan clergy have not explicitly engaged with issues of sexuality in the past, since these were 'muted' in the 'Catholic' element of their discourse. Fr Jude does not occupy this space alone.

Spaces, with their balances and blends of individual and communal discourses expressed through the main cultural elements shaping the mission place, acquire certain characteristics such as 'vulnerable', 'commitment', 'contest' and 'compromise'. Combinations of the contributing cultural elements give rise to these characteristics, and 'Catholic' and 'development' may define a space as one of 'opportunity', while 'lugbara' and 'Catholic' may give rise to a space of 'conflict', while certain combinations of 'lugbara' and 'development' create spaces of 'failure'. The characteristics of an imagined space are therefore not always clear-cut, and it they merely describe the space, which is much more complex than any one descriptor may suggest.

Imagined spaces used in this way has allowed me to focus on women of the mission place; I could have chosen the imagined spaces of the elderly, of children, of 'madmen' in the community, and this demonstrates one of the strengths and potential uses of this method of analysis.

There are limitations and drawbacks to the use of imagined spaces as an analytical tool, and I acknowledge the danger of expecting 'it' to 'explain everything' simply by virtue of its flexibility. I would like to highlight several of these at this concluding stage of the thesis.

In concentrating on one research setting, there is a danger of 'clumping together' the imagined spaces which exist outside that setting into groups which are too crude. I, for instance, have referred to 'village girl' as an imagined space in other settings beyond the mission place, denying the complexity of the imagined spaces within these other

settings, and of this type of space itself. Secondly, the analysis places such emphasis on the boundary 'infringements' 'ignitions' and 'breaches' that it might lead one to assume, for example, that all priests, brothers and Sisters in West Nile are sexually active, which I sincerely doubt is the case. Also, in defining the boundaries of accountability, I establish the 'main' discourses which set the terms, and there remains the possibility that a 'minor' cultural element may rise to dominate in certain circumstances that has not been foregrounded.

I think the concept may require more rigorous definition in the matter of mobility between spaces and creation of new spaces. Does Jude's 'new space' exist in communal discourse already, or does his individual 'discursive repertoire' establish it within a communal discourse? While I believe that it is actually a strength of the concept that the terms of accountability which define the boundaries of imagined spaces shift in accordance to external 'circumstances', I acknowledge that these may need to be drawn out more. Its strength is that 'circumstances' may be, for example, "two months in which the entire mission was forced to relocate as refugees to Zaire", which would engender such a change in how people view their own and other's actions (and imagined spaces), that as 'circumstances' it *must* be incorporated into the conceptual design.

Finally, the way in which I construct and represent this analysis is that my voice is problematically predominant in the narratives I present. It is difficult to encourage people to express their own imagined spaces directly, and so I draw heavily on communal discourse (which is not neutral) and on observations of individual's 'discursive repertoires (which likewise, may not be neutral). The material is often very sensitive and not explicitly expressed, and so my representation of events carries more of my authority than I would like. A return fieldtrip might allow me to elicit more coherent expressions of how people construct and express their own imagined spaces, not to mention attend to some of my concerns about consultation with sources about the outcome of my research.

9.3 And what *about* the sex?

I need to ask myself how my construction and analysis of imagined spaces has accommodated sexual issues, and whether the religious setting made too much or too little of them. Doesn't 'illicit' sex go on in other 'development places', as it certainly does in other 'lugbara places'? Anecdotal evidence is certainly that sexual relations play a part in the politic of development project communities, but there is no evidence of this in the literature. 'Personal secretaries' are common in every office, and as Roper (1996) stresses, sex and money and power have a long association. As I have revealed of the diocese (that monies go 'astray' in connection with illicit relationships) perhaps the same could be said of 'Save the Children' or 'Oxfam'? The Church of Uganda in the northern part of Uganda, and certainly the 'saved' Balankole churches of the region place such emphasis on the sinful nature of extra-marital sexual relations, that sex carries an illicit 'weight' in their discourse that might equal the 'Catholic' position. What remains significantly different about the 'Catholic' religious setting is that Catholic clergy, who also happen to manage very substantial sums of development funding (far in excess of other denominational projects), have public lives that are defined as *celibate*. Whether catholic funding agencies carry assumptions of 'trustworthiness' on the shared understanding of this celibacy, or whether they are fully aware of the implications for projects of the illicit expression of sexualities is an interesting (generally unasked and unanswered) question.

My analysis of imagined spaces has revealed that all the cultural elements in the mission place (informing individual space and communal discourse) are ingrained with issues relating to sex and sexuality, and that this is an intrinsic element of the power relations that exist there. As such, this is true of other 'mission places' and places where power is exercised, where its significance is underestimated if not totally absent from discourse.

Other volunteers working in Catholic missions throughout Africa report that missionary orders and local clergy and religious behave in this manner elsewhere. This is sometimes within a homosexual context, and is often in relation to much

larger sums of development that I consider in Boraja. This would suggest that not only is the situation in Boraja 'typical', but that it is merely 'the tip of the iceberg'.

9.4 Where to now?

I have already suggested some research possibilities that this thesis raises. In terms of using 'imagined spaces' as a conceptual tool, it would be useful to analyse the contemporary mission place from other perspectives but in the same way. Rather than focusing on women, perhaps 'refugees', 'health workers' or any selected group could be identified and their spaces defined and analysed. The value of being able to consider the individual's agency in the context of a social setting which draws on several cultural influences, means that the 'ruptures' in the general understanding of 'refugee camps' or 'medical centres' could be fully examined. Methodologically, I commend ethnography for analysis of imagined spaces, and indeed for any places where the west seems to have 'made its mind up' about. Law illustrated how the sex bars of Southeast Asia are more than zones of sexual and colonial exploitation (1997), and I reveal that missions are complex, contradictory and creative places for women. Perhaps if cultural geographers turn their ethnographic focus to other 'known' places (opium fields, bath houses or religious cults) we might surprise ourselves again.

In terms of avenues of interest that I left unexplored in the mission place, there is some potential in examining issues of sexuality which are not heterosexually defined. Much of the cultural discourse in this area (and especially in missions) defines homosexuality in terms of deviance, but it would be interesting to see if any 'new' spaces were emerging that are necessarily very private, and whether the presence of all-male and all-female religious communities has engendered any evidence of non-heterosexual relations in this area. Also, in the light of recent revelations about events in Catholic institutions of the west, where new codes of accountability are being exercised against men and women 'celibates' who abused their positions of power, it seems imperative that we question the boundaries of the imagined spaces of Catholic clergy elsewhere.

I do not underestimate the difficulty of this research proposal, nor of another which I feel offers potential. In this thesis I briefly mentioned the presence of 'madmen' and 'madwomen' in the communities of West Nile. The imagined spaces they occupy are framed by markedly different terms of accountability than those in the community who are considered 'normal'. How they function within communities, and how local discourse defines 'mad' is a fascinating area to explore, especially in the context of many of these people having been 'sent mad' in the 'disturbances'. To consider the fuller social and cultural impact of the 'disturbances' on the communities and individuals of this area, and how they have constructed new codes of 'normality' is a challenging project.

This brings me to a final broader research perspective that I acknowledge this thesis has not addressed. Placing individual lives in a broader political framework is common in postcolonial ethnography, and it has not been done in West Nile. I would like to open up my consideration of the church's role in the area to the full weight of a postcolonial critique. To question and examine the relationship (collusion and conflict) between the 'church' and 'coloniser' is an endeavour now due (the Comarofs' work stands as an obvious example here). That the area was colonised by first Belgian and then British administrations, and then evangelised by Italian Catholic and British Protestant missionaries immediately suggests several cross-cultural perspectives in the analysis of efforts to transform lugbara consciousness. Also, the way in which this colonial past has been constructed in communal discourse in the light of West Nile's traumatic post-independence history (its association with Idi Amin and its sufferings during the 'disturbances') means that the colonial and missionary legacies have been measured lightly.

When I set out on the journey that this thesis represents, I hoped to say something 'useful', responding to the frustration expressed by Knight (1986) "Why doesn't geography do something?". The context of poverty and suffering in West Nile acted as a backdrop to every step of my work, and I view this analysis as contributing to the understanding of women's negotiation with poverty and struggle.

With this perspective in mind, I have celebrated the detail and the minutiae of the

everyday in bright and beautiful Boraja, with the chilling words of Michael Watts anchoring my work, warning that if western scholars do not continue to engage with contexts and issues of injustice, that we will "watch the world slip away into darkness" (1991:11).

Annex A

Images of Boraja

I offer the following selection of photographs as an illustrative annex to the text of my thesis. They are not 'interpretative' material in themselves, although I believe that the images they represent are more meaningful in the light of my analysis than they might be at first glance. The photographs depict the people of Boraja in various commonplace and special contexts. They are all 'mission' images that together portray the "dynamic, complex, creative and powerful" place that I believe the mission to be. In the photographs we see women at all stages of their life course, occupying their imagined spaces in ways that conform with and contest their boundaries. Some of the spaces are more 'development' than 'lugbara', or more 'Catholic' than 'development', but the images emphasize that women occupy these spaces in roles, duties, choices and responsibilities in active and ongoing ways. They are not 'typical' imagined spaces that I illustrate here, but dynamic, individual spaces which are not 'un-typical'.

The photographs were taken with the consent of the person depicted, who received copies of the 'snap' to keep.

- Plate 1: Grandmother, mother and sister of new-born triplets brought to Boraja Hospital for 'assisted feeding'. The babies were born in the home village.
- Plate 2: 'Endria' Gloria Ajio with her young charge, Deo Gratias Endemega.
- Plate 3: A new mother with her firstborn, who was delivered in Boraja Hospital.
- Plate 4: A lugbara mother and daughters as they return from a morning's digging.
- Plate 5: The first Christians of Boraja Parish: Drakuru Claria sitting equal among men.
- Plate 6: Aliru Lilli, a student at BDSI, with her teacher (the author) by the grotto.
- Plate 7: Afekoru Rose, BDSI student, displaying a 'modern' cake she has baked for a 'Top Table' function in the parish.
- Plate 8: Headmistress and Deputy of BDSI, entertaining at a Women's Day celebration, being served by BDSI students.
- Plate 9: Lay Assistants teaching at Boraja Nursery.
- Plate 10: Sisters on the mission verandah.
- Plate 11: Sr. Margaret Ajiko and a friend's baby.
- Plate 12: (New) Sister Matron and the staff of Boraja Hospital Carpentry Workshop.



Plate 1

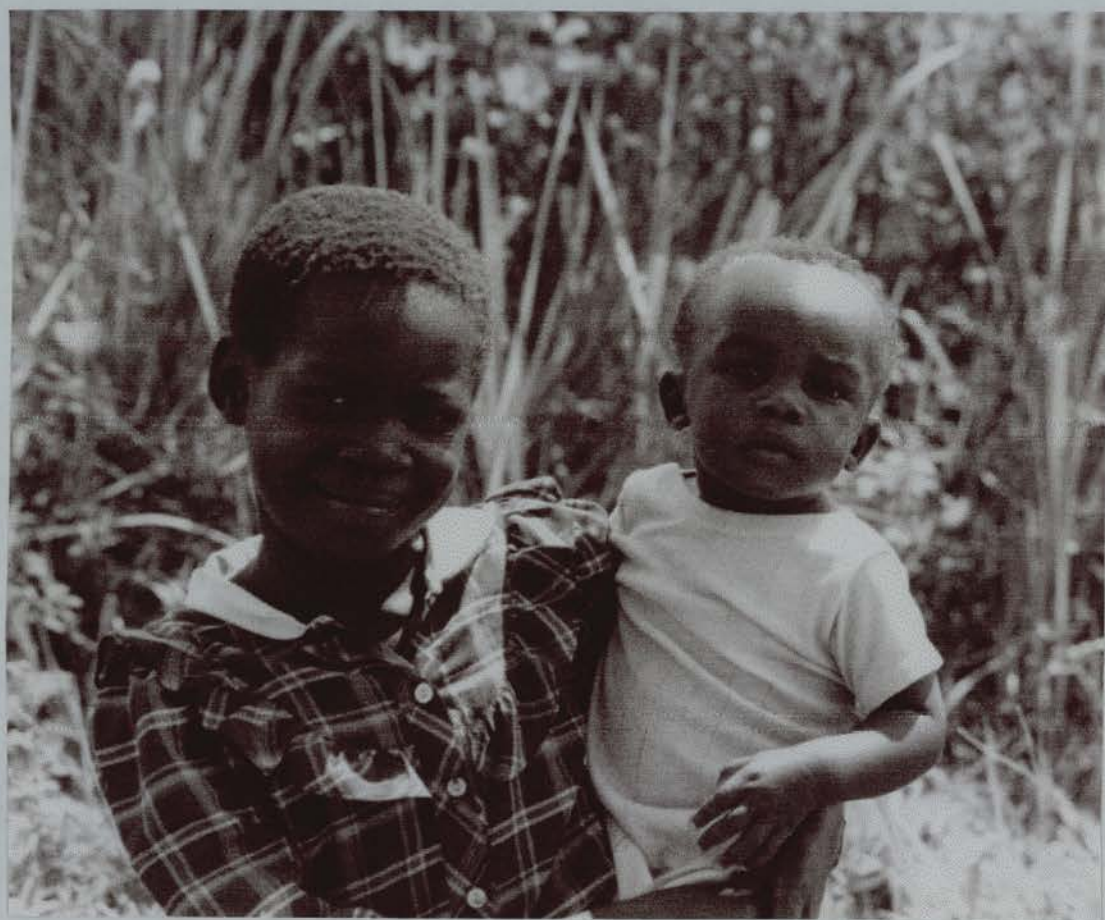


Plate 2



Plate 3



Plate 4



Plate 5



Plate 6



Plate 7



Plate 8



Plate 9



Plate 10



Plate 11



Plate 12

Appendix 1 : Contributors to my ethnography.

I list these people with the name that I knew them by, but I have not denoted age, occupation or sex, in order to preserve the anonymity of the quotations used within the thesis text.

UGANDANS:

Aliru Lilli, Baba Sarah, Bako Hellen, Amaniyo Sarah, Babra, Candia George, Onzia Philomena, Amaniyo Lilli, Onziga Joseph, Candiru Devota, Angua Jacqueline, Ayakaka Rose, Cici, Dramani Augusto, Candiru Rosa, Ayikoru Harriet, Drakuru Agnes, Drama Frances, Banacia Betty, Orache Christopher, Drandua Frederick, Amos, Debo Peter, Ben, Edama Ronald, Osoa Bosco, Elizabeth, Candiru Dianah, Drateru Harriet, Ombogo Titus, Eyotaru Bibian, Etoru Veronica, Eyotaru Roselyn, Eyotaru Simon, Ezaru Harriet, Inzikuru Knight, Koreo Agatha, Peyerina, Ezama Bosco, Freda, Ojaku Stellah, Invibo Alfred, Innocent Molly, Jackondo, Ruko Betty, Mama Kamms, Koreo Lilly, Gown Kenyi, Pius, Sakaru Assumpta, Salome Mama, Margaret Kerimundu, Taibo Rosa, Amia Rosemary, Alio Robert, Ssenegoba Fred, Laki James, Alioni Gabriel, Laki Alan, Ssenegu James, Loy Adiga, Madrwua Pierino, Matua Jimmy, Drakuru Claria, Alioni Irene, Tijako Semel, Moro Rose, Mundua Stephen, Alisiku Lawrence, Akim Phillip, Aniku John, Acidri Rose, Aseii Kassiano, Mundua Victor, Mvazimaniku Raphael, Tiperu Rebeca, Ethan, Anguparu Rose, Obelea Cesar, Obicaru Natalia, Vala, Viko Palma, Ajiko Margaret, Ogavu James, Acidri Karmello, Acuru Jane, Anyaria Peter, Adima Joseph, Ogavu Paskwalina, Ajiga Ulpiano, Ojobile Stephen, Olali Ezira, Ajio Margaret, Olikuru Martina, Olio Ezraeli, Onduru Celina, Byaruhanga Akiiki, Onduru Sarah, Alilio Koro, Alejo Lucy, Laki Mary, Onzia Clementina, Alitya Marcellino, Andama Charles, Waigo Gracian, Andama Wilson, Andebati Fabiano, Andema Joel, Androdri Blasio, Anguyo Bianca, Joeyebo Vero, Anjeru Lucy, Anyanzo Sabino, Aranduga Augustus, Arugbu Cassiano, Asuru Rita, Aryerawgo Esther, Atimango Roselyn, Awil Sarah, Awuru Peyerina, Atimango Alice

FOREIGNERS

Kathie Asikki, Ettore Pedrini, Alice Bently, Anne Reidy, Elia Pampaloni, Gerry Bleem, Rossi Piergiogio, Deirdre Owens, Beverly Pluth, Chris Cassins, Margaret Cassins, Anne O'Dea, Steve Coulsen, Carmen Rodriguez, Maggie Prowse, Rebecca Coulsen, Danny Coyne, Tonino Pasolini, Mario Ruggieri, Shea O'Byrne, Karen Coyne, Terry Cross, Pauline Cross, Ian Dolan, Maria Douglas, Eithne O'Shea, Rudi Deuber, Marita Rasche-Deuber, Ron Pruhs, Elizabeth Noble, Marianna Emmanuel, Paul Evans, Mary Eyres, Zack Pruhs, Don Meuller, Pat Eyres, Albert Fiesel, Belinda Mahon, Claire Martin, Fernando Avila, Gareth, Heidi Strasser, Alan Forbes, Winnie Foxton, Jonathon, Clare McWilliams, Salvano Renzo, Mary Sweeney, Tarcisio DalSanto, Phil Franks, Solsia Antonio, Meabh McMahon, Hans Strasser, Felicity Wallace, Peter, Lynne Stafford, Dave Joyce, Niall McMenamin, Ronnie Pruhs, Madeline Smyth, Carol Terry, Margaret O'Kane, Virginia Jordan, Tom, Loraine Devlin, Luciano Fulvi, Maureen, Amelia Walker, Jean Gallagher, Giacammo Daniello, Tony Ruin, Johann McLeod, Frederick Walls, Gill Cooper, Sherry Meyer, Bonafini Giovanni, Udeschini Giuseppe, Michael Terry, Ray Towey, Maureen Longmore, Cindy Vian, Forbes Walker, Thomas Bryce, Liz, Sandy Grady, Joy Grinday, John Hannon, Meave Hannon, Gwyn Harris, Phillip Templeton, Alan Hawkins, Tony Hester, Dessie Longmore, Lazaro, Dan, John Wilding, Nick, Andreas Worhl, Zita, Hienz, Joe Collins, Karl, Vance McGlinchy, Karl, Mark O'Mara, Monique, Ray Jordan, Louise Keating, Mark Cummings, Alan Keenan, Jimmy Carrol, Celina, Claire O'Driscoll, Maggie Hart, Toni Lasalandra

Appendix 2

One hundred years of outside influence in West Nile ; the missionary and administrative history of the region from 1863 to 1962.

It was during the seventeenth century that the ethnic mix to be found today in West Nile was permanently established there. The Lugbara and Madi, of the Moro-Madi group which extends from this Lugbaraland eastwards to Lake Chad, were already in their central positions, when some of the Lwo, who had come from southeastern Sudan to settle in Acholiland, crossed the Nile at Pakwach (place of the Axe) to escape overcrowding east of the river. Around the same time, Nilo-Hamatic Kakwa and Bari moved west into the region, and settled in the northern part of the present district. In 1650, the Langi tried to encroach upon the Madi, but are repulsed back across the Nile.

It is principally because of the Nile that Europeans entered the area at all. Travellers and Explorers sailed south along the Nile as their safest route into central Africa, and in the 1860s and 1870s, British expeditions competed to locate the elusive "Source of the Nile"¹. The first European to enter the area west of the Nile was Amabile De Bono, a Maltese trader and nephew of a well-known Slave trader. From his uncle's trading post in Sudan, he travelled near Adjumani, on the Nile. Various travellers passed through Adjumani and Wadei, mainly from the north and Sudan, although Speke visited as he travelled northwards from Buganda in 1863. In 1877, Dr. W. Junker journeyed on foot from Yei (Sudan) to Koboko, Maracha and Olovu, on a private expedition, but the information about the area reaching the outside world referred to the devastating human and livestock epidemics of rinderpest and meningitis that swept the region in the 1880s and 1890s.

Sudanese politics affected the area more than Bugandan affairs, and when Amin Pasha was under attack during the Mahdist rebellion, he was stranded at Dufile and Wadei.

¹ The Royal Geographical Society sponsored the expeditions of Speke and Burton (1862) and Stanley (1875) (in the same era as Livingstone) as part of a national political agenda to secure the territory in which the Nile originated (see Sathyamurthy 1986, Jorgensen 1981, Nabudare 1980 and Hansen 1984).

In 1889 he abandoned his camps and 10,000 soldiers for the coast, when he was relieved by Stanley (McEwan 1988). In 1884, the Berlin conference had shared out Africa among the interested imperial European colonialists, and this area became known as the "Lado Enclave". The Congo Free State was formally established in the following year, to the immediate west of West Nile. In 1890, the British Protectorate was declared, but its northern boundaries were undetermined. A Belgian expedition lay claim to the territory after signing a treaty with one of Emin Pasha's ex-soldiers in 1892, the same year that Propoganda Fide allocated northern Uganda to the evangelistic care of the Verona Fathers. The Belgian's only foray into 'lugbaraland' was to establish an outpost at Ofude, where they established 'chiefs' among the lugbara, who had been noted in the main for their lack of hierarchical political organisation (see Middleton 1958). They made 'chiefs' of the wealthier men who also happened to be followers of a Kakwa prophet called 'Rembe'. It was at this time that the word 'Mundu' came into use to refer to outsiders who were administrators. The word originally meant 'rifle', and was applied to foreigners and locally created 'chiefs' whose position of authority among the lugbara was only possible with the support of governmental powers.

In 1894, when the British laid claim to Wadelei, after signing a treaty with a local chief, the necessity to settle who would be responsible for colonising the area became apparent. In May, "West Nile" was assigned to Belgium in the Anglo-Belgian treaty, and the British set up stations on the eastern bank of the Nile, while the Belgians established their forts in West Nile. The area became Mount Wati District and forts were built at Adjumani (1898), Dufile (1899), Wadelei (1900) and Yumbe (Hansen 1984, Nabudare 1980). Map 8 illustrates the kingdoms of the Uganda Protectorate in 1900 and the locations of 'colonial places' in West Nile.

In 1909, West Nile and Madi passed to the Sudan after the death of the Belgian King, Leopold II in 1908. This was a time of elephant poaching, and when 'rupees' were introduced as a cash currency, exchanged for labour. In 1910, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Khartoum and two other Verona Fathers arrived in Nimule, having travelled by boat to Gondokoro where the congregation's boat, the "Redemptor" was halted by cataracts on the river. They received permission to establish a mission at Omach, near

the administrative centre of Kobe, and Fr. Colombaroli was joined there by more Verona Fathers. The following year, the British administration moved to Gulu and the Verona Fathers followed. In 1913 and 1914, diocesan and administrative boundaries were finalised, and in 1914 'Pax Britannica' was signed, and D.C. Weatherhead gave the official name "West Nile" to the area, choosing Arua as his headquarters. The Ugandan border was drawn so that Nimule and Gondokoro were now in Sudan. As throughout Uganda (see Pirouet 1978, Russell 1966, Tourigny 1979, Kaberuka 1992, Ward 1991), the British administration was largely responsible for the establishment of counties and the introduction of taxation, labour migration and imported goods, while their presence facilitated the activities of the missionaries who brought Christianity, and formal education and healthcare. Together, they challenged the fabric of local culture, values and lifestyles².

An outbreak of sleeping sickness forced the population on the east bank to cross to the west, but the missionaries were refused permission to accompany them. In 1916, Fr. Vignato finally crossed the Nile, where he set up a mission station at Orussi. From Orussi, the station moved to Angal and eventually quit Omach altogether. Similarly, further north, the station at Palone (established in 1912) moved to Moyo. Both new mission stations experienced epidemics in 1917, and while smallpox persisted in Angal, the next station to be opened in Arua (1918) was struggling with famine in its first year (Tourigny 1979, Tuma and Mitibwa (eds) 1977).

As the Catholic missions expanded, with support from Gulu, Khartoum, Rome and Europe, the Anglican church of Uganda, which was struggling to support its initiative in Gulu, lacked the manpower and resources to start evangelism in West Nile. It is interesting to note that each denomination discounted the other's evangelistic efforts in an area as worthless, yet hurried to establish their own stations when the "opponent" reached a new area (see Russell 1966 and Tourigny 1979).

It was, quite by chance that the Protestant church became established in West Nile. The

² There is a substantial literature documenting and analysing the combined impact of colonial and missionary endeavour in Uganda, notably Pirouet 1978, Jorgensen 1981, Hansen and Twaddle, 1988, 1991, 1994, Kaberuka 1992 and Mundoola 1993)

Africa Inland Mission (AIM, an evangelical, non-Anglican congregation) was sending a family of missionaries to Congo. As Frank Gardner and his wife, children and brother passed through West Nile en route to Congo, D.C. Weatherhead asked them to stay and work with the famine relief that was trying to counter the devastating effects of famine in the area. They stayed first at Vurra, and later at Mvara, a small hill near Arua town. They evangelised as they worked, but agreed to work along Anglican lines, and that their converts would belong to the established Anglican Church of Uganda. This was to avoid conflict with the Church of Uganda, and also to establish a Protestant evangelising presence to match the catholic Verona Fathers. In 1922, the AIM missionaries produced the first lugbara translation of St. Mark's Gospel.

Perhaps because of the informal nature of the Protestant mission, the early missionaries there encountered many problems, and within the space of the first five years, twenty different people came and went. In 1923, Rev. and Mrs Vallor arrived at Mvara and brought some stability to the mission there (Russell 1966). In the same year, there was some reorganisation of the Roman Catholic church, and the Prefecture of Equatorial Nile was cut off from the Vicariate of the Bahr al Gazal, with Monsignor Vignato as the first Prefect Apostolic. Soon, the first Verona Sisters arrived at Angal to work on the dispensary and health services there, and in 1926 Sisters arrived at Moyo in the north. In 1925, the foundation statue of Arua cathedral (RC) was blessed, as the Protestant Diocese of Upper Nile erected their first church at Gol. Lodonga mission was opened in 1927 (RC), and Arua cathedral inaugurated in 1928.

The 1930s were marked by the steady expansion of both churches, nationally and in West Nile (Tuma and Mitibwa 1977). The 1931 census had reported that 31% of the entire population was now Christian (with slightly more Catholics than Protestants). The catholic Prefecture became a Vicariate, and in 1938, the first Lugbara priest, Fr Donation Bala, was ordained. With the spread of the churches, the Verona Fathers also opened colleges at Nyapea (1940) and Ombaci (1943) - even in these difficult war years when most of their missionaries were interned at Katigongo. A Teacher Training College was opened in Lodonga in 1945, and Maracha mission was established in 1949. The West Nile's first indigenous congregation, the Marian Brothers, was established by

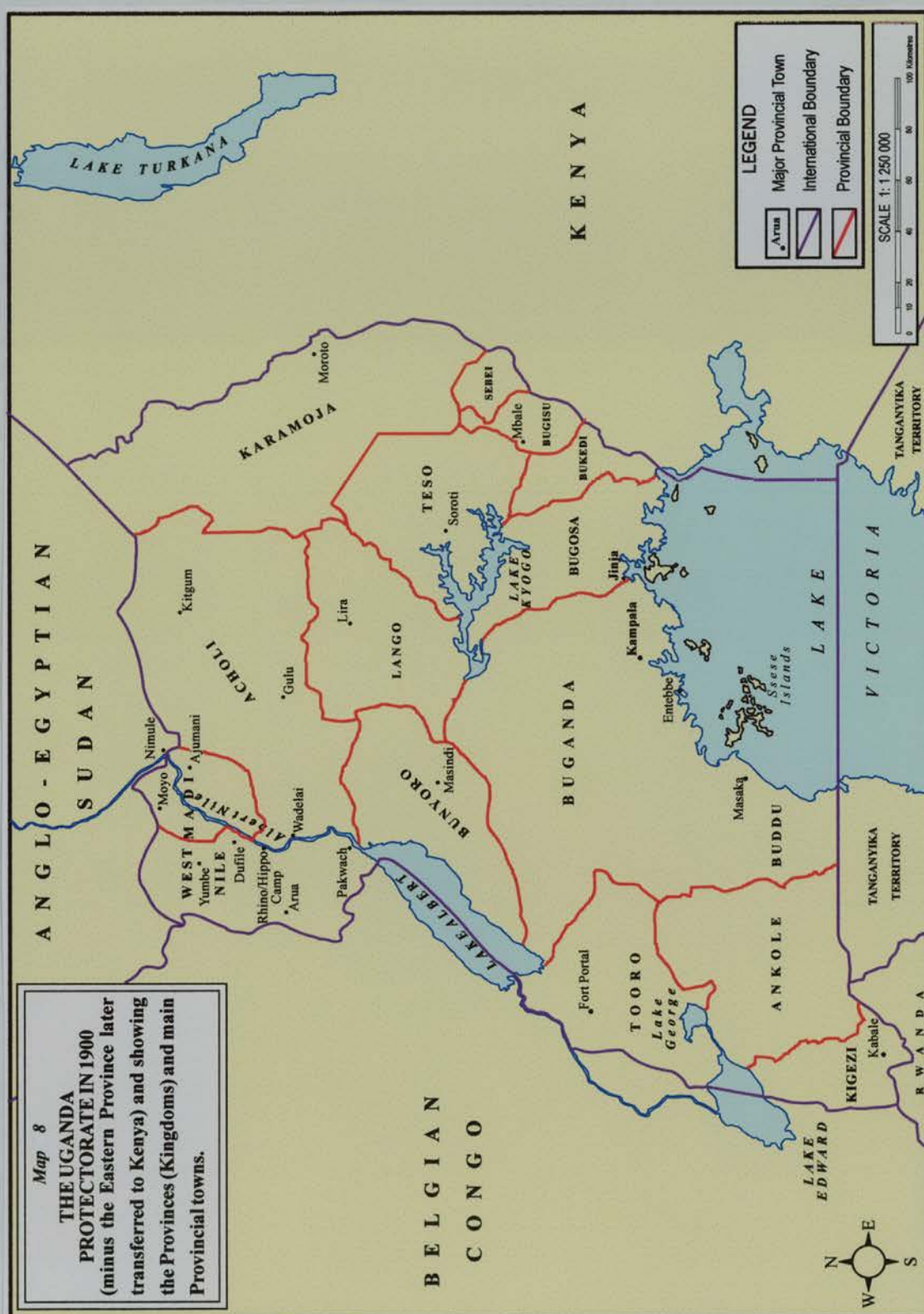
Bishop Cesana in 1952.

The Protestant mission work had been overshadowed by the impressive Catholic investment in schools, hospitals and dispensaries, but in 1951, AIM opened a hospital at Kuluva, a few miles outside Arua, with a specialist leper settlement. This establishment became the main focus of overseas Protestant aid for the area, and the main destination for Protestant lay missionaries. The Catholic church in West Nile gained a degree of autonomy in 1958, when Arua Diocese was established, independent of Gulu, and with Fr. Angelo Tarantino (an Italian) as its first bishop. An administrative centre grew at Ediofe, near the cathedral, and the townscape of Arua now boasted its own Kampala-esque denominational hills - Ediofe for the Catholics and Mvara for the Protestants (for a discussion of the territoriality of denominational establishments in Uganda's first missions, see Mackay 1890 and Jones 1926, and for its contemporary tension see Gifford 1998, Mundoola 1993).

Ordination of local priests and opening of new missions continued throughout the 1960s. The diocese attracted considerable national and overseas financial support because of its particular situation and location. Being under a British administration, it was considered a stable area in which to invest mission funds. More significantly, this northernmost Ugandan diocese represented the frontline of defense against the "advancing hoards of Islamic infidels", threatening a "Christian" Africa from Sudan (see Natukunda-Togboa 1991 and McEwan 1988). There was a substantial muslim presence in West Nile already, and both Christian denominations united in their fear that the West Nile would be used as a base from which Muslims would convert Uganda to Islam. Muslims lived in concentrated groups in certain parts of the West Nile, and one such area was Aringa county along the northern border. The Verona Fathers had already established their mission schools, Teacher Training College and dispensary there, but as a more substantial visual statement, the enormous church was dedicated as a Basilica to Our Lady in 1961. The first Basilica in Africa, this was situated as a powerful symbol of Christian presence and magnificence.

In 1962, Uganda was granted independence from its British "Protector", a political

change that was apprehensively welcomed in West Nile. The ethnic groups of this region suspected that the more powerful groupings of the south (Banyoro and Buganda in particular) held the peoples of the north in contempt, and thought that the British administration treated the north more fairly than the governing south would. With independence, the mainstream churches of Uganda found themselves part of a new administration where religion and politics were implicitly and opposingly situated, and the modern history of independent Uganda bears witness to the struggle of the organised churches to fight this divisive sectarianism (see Gifford 1998, Mutibwa 1992, Kaberuka 1992).



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